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of Sport, Story and Adventure

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No. 16. Published
Every Week.

M. J. IVERS & CO., Publishers,
(James Sullivan, Proprietor.)
379 Pearl Street, New York.

Price 5 Cents. Vol. II.
\$2.50 a Year.

Wide-Awake Ned; or, The Boy Wizard.

BY BARRY RINGGOLD.



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THE WONDER AND ADMIRATION OF THE INDIANS KEPT INCREASING AS TOM CONTINUED TO DISPLAY HIS CURIOUS MARVELS.

Wide-Awake Ned;

OR,

THE BOY WIZARD.

BY BARRY RINGGOLD.

CHAPTER I.

PERILOUS RIDING.

"QUICK, Ned! quick, Tom, or we are lost!"

"Yes, sure as never wass, we's dead, already, if somedings cants not be done!"

The first speaker was Grace Derrick, a lovely brunette of fifteen, the second was Yohon, a Dutch lad, one year older; the two persons whom the girl addressed were Tom Derrick, her brother, who was of her own age, and Ned Transom—a young hunter, of sixteen.

These four people who occupied a canvas-covered wagon, drawn by a couple of stout horses, were now in a situation of great peril.

The vehicle was being directed along a rocky path, near the edge of a lengthy bight, among the rocky ranges of hills south of Bill Williams's Mountain, Arizona.

The sun had just gone down in a mass of ragged-looking black clouds, which were whirling round and round, while the howling of a coming tornado, with the roar of falling sheets of rain, saluted the ears of the party.

The gale approaching with great rapidity, threatened to strike the canvas top of the wagon "broadside on," and whirl it over the edge of the precipice, dashing it upon the rocks a hundred feet below.

There was no room to turn the horses, as pointed masses of rock lay on the east side of the vehicle, within a few feet of it. It was evident that no human being could stand against the furious wind which came thundering on. The occupants of the conveyance, were they to jump out upon the path, would, a minute later, be lifted from their feet and blown from the lofty bight.

"Oh, dear! what shall we do? What can we do?" cried Grace, clasping her small hands together, as the tornado drew every moment nearer.

"Don't you fret about it, little one!" said Ned Transom, as he sprung lightly from the wagon. "Jest throw me the end of our rope, Tom!" he added to the girl's brother.

Seen upon his feet in the light, Ned Transom was a strong, well built young fellow, with brown curly hair, blue eyes and a handsome resolute face. He wore the usual costume of a hunter—consisting of a buckskin shirt, leggings, coonskin cap and a broad belt containing a pistol and a long knife—the latter having a handle, which Tom, himself, had carved from the horn of a buffalo he had shot.

"What are you going to do with the rope, Ned?" inquired Tom as he threw it.

"To save you all with it, includin' the wooden people, too!"

"Hol bo!" cried Tom. "It would be a loss if those things should get smashed! Hurry! for God's sake!"

The "wooden people" alluded to by the hunter were toys of all descriptions, carried in a box in the wagon.

In fact, Tom Derrick and his assistant, the Dutch boy, Yohon, were skillful toy-makers, who, not finding their business very good in the little settlement where they had been carrying it on, were now emigrating to Tucson, much further south, where they would find more white people than they had hitherto met with, and, consequently, more customers.

With the rope Tom threw to him, Ned made a secure hitch around the wheel spokes, and also in the hoops about the canvas top. Then fastening the other part of the line to a rocky spur, he still had enough of the long rope left to pass it over the backs and under the bellies of the two horses, after which he made a second hitch.

"Do you think that will hold?" inquired Tom.

"I'm shore of it. The rope is a big one, you know, and, besides, these rocks will keep off the wind a little."

"Are we safe in the wagon?" inquired Grace.

"Yes, you're safer than, now, than you'd be anywhere else. Halloa! hear she comes!" added Ned, as he sprung into the vehicle, with the tornado roaring at his heels.

"Heaven help us!" cried Grace, as she clung to her brother, while the gale, with the roar of many thunders, striking the wagon, caused it to shake, reel, and tip, as if, in spite of the strong rope, it would turn over the edge of the precipice.

"Mein gollies!" cried Yohon. "How dem wag-in rocketlis! I hope we safes ebberyting—der jumping jacks, der dancin' monke's, mit der little bells on der head, der babies dat can shpeak, der shteam-engin's dat can go midout shteam, der little watches dat goes, too, already, fur only five cent apiece, der shky-rockets, pin-wheels, and all der odder part ob der shtock, which costis us mooch trouble and expenshe, and last, and de most precious ob all, I haf hopes we safes Grace Derrick!"

"Pach that!" said Ned. "Grace is not a part of the stock, any way you kin fix it!"

Yohon was looking admiringly at the girl, who, however, did not seem at all pleased with his regards, for she turned her back to him, and spoke to her brother.

By this time her alarm had somewhat subsided, for the tempest, violent as it was, could not hurl the wagon from the rope which held it.

The canvas top, however, was driven in, and it seemed as if it must soon collapse, should the gale continue much longer to blow with such fury.

Meanwhile a large rubber blanket had been carefully wrapped around the box in which the toys and fireworks were packed, to prevent their being damaged by the rain, which had found its way through the canvas, and was dropping about the interior.

"The wind seems to increase, instead of going down!" remarked Tom.

"You're right, that," said Ned, "and—" He was interrupted by a snapping sound, and at the same moment, one of the horses commenced to plunge sideways, in its efforts to prevent it.

self from being blown over the edge of the hight.

Grace uttered a shriek of terror, for it seemed as if both horses were about to go over the brink of the rocky elevation.

"De rope haf give way! T'under and blitzen! If dem horses goes, den we all goes too!" shouted Yohon.

"Yes, the rope has broken!" cried Tom.

"What's to be done?"

As quick as a flash, Ned picked up another rope in the wagon, fastened one end to a hook, on the inside of the vehicle, and took, with the other part, a turn about his body.

Then he sprung boldly out, to be hurled off his feet, as he had expected, against one of the horses. Seizing the bridles of the horses, he jerked their heads away from the edge of the hight, and using them as a shield from the wind, he forced them up against the cones of rock. This gave the rope which had broken sufficient length to enable him to take another hitch about one of the rugged masses, while at the same time, he shoved the line further from the heads of the horses, for he rightly judged that it was their biting at the strands which had caused it to give way.

Still keeping under the "lee" of the animals, Ned regained the wagon, to be greeted with applause by both his friends—Grace and Tom Derrick.

"That was a bold move!" said the latter. "It's lucky you came with us. We couldn't get along without such a friend!—could we, Grace?"

The latter, blushing slightly, answered in a low voice, but with much warmth:

"No, indeed, he is the bravest boy I ever saw."

Yohon frowned.

"If so be's he not haf been here, I would haf done de same as him, already! Dere was notting so berry praves in dem doings!"

"Pack that, Yohon!" cried Tom. "A better hand than you at toy-making, excepting myself, never 'slung' the glue. You can carve a monkey's head, or can make a set of little chairs, or a Chinese boat quicker than most of the craft, but when it comes to trials of this kind you're not at home like Ned here."

"You finds I can do odder t'ings, 'fore we gits through dem travel to Tuscon. I can risks my life, any day, to safe Miss Grace!"

"I don't doubt your pluck, Yohon," said Tom, who was well disposed toward so skillful an assistant.

"Do you doubts mein plook, neider, Miss Grace?" inquired Yohon of the girl.

"I have never seen you tried," was the reply.

"I only hopes as you will. I hafs as mooch plook as Ned Transom!"

"Come, Yohon, that will do. This is no time for bandying words," said Tom.

Yohon looked sullen, and turned his back to the speaker.

Meanwhile the storm continued to rage, but, after dark, the wind subsided, although the rain still fell in torrents.

The horses were again put in motion, and, an hour later, the party reached a sort of natural archway, near the center of a hill.

Through this archway a broad stream rushed impetuously, but there was a wide, flat rock on one side of it, and here the travelers concluded to pass the night.

The horses were unhitched, tied to a rugged projection and fed with oats, after which, Ned having found a snug alcove in the side of the rocky wall, said he would there make his quarters.

Yohon also brought a blanket to the hollow, which was large enough for four people, and the twain soon were in a deep slumber. As for Tom and his sister, each slept in opposite sides of the wagon.

CHAPTER II.

ADRIFT.

It might have been about two hours after he closed his eyes, when Tom was awakened by a strange sidelong motion of the wagon.

He sprang up, and looked about him in surprise.

The vehicle he occupied was adrift!

Yes, there could be no doubt of this, for, although the night was dark, he could see, by the light of his lantern the waters rushing on all sides of him, bearing the conveyance with them.

The wheels touched bottom, but so strong was the current that the wagon was dragged along by it with great rapidity.

"What is the matter, Tom?" inquired Grace, who was roused by the flash of the lantern, which Tom now held above his head to obtain a better view of his situation.

"We are afloat," he replied.

"Why, how did it happen?" inquired Grace, rising in alarm.

"The rain must have caused the water to overflow the flat rock on which was the wagon, and have washed it off."

"What will become of us?"

"We'll fetch up somewhere, before long, I hope," said the boy.

"But the wagon will sink. We shall be drowned."

"It is not deep enough for that. We are being drawn along the bottom by the force of the current."

"Cannot we get ashore?"

"Not in such a current as this."

"Where are Ned and Yohon? How far are we from them?"

"I cannot tell, because it is so dark. Probably they know nothing of our situation."

"Is there no way to stop our course?"

"There is none at present. This stream, is, I think, a branch of the Rio Verde. We may be stopped by rocks, before long."

"Will not the wagon be dashed to pieces against them?"

"No, for I can deaden the speed by means of this," said Tom, pointing to a long pole, which, with many other useful articles, was in the vehicle.

"Perhaps, if you shouted, Ned might hear us, and come to help us."

"Not he. He sleeps like a porpoise, when he once closes his eyes. Besides, I think we've been going this way for some time, and are too far

off for him to hear us, even if we should cry out."

"Hark! what is that noise ahead?"

"You hear the roaring of the falling rain—that is all."

"It is too loud for rain."

She came to her brother's side, and, leaning on his arm, peered through the gloom.

In the distance, she fancied she saw something white, and pointed it out to Tom.

"You are right," he said, "I think it is a cataract!"

The two looked at each other, in dismay.

"There is nothing can save us, now!" she cried. "We will be carried over the brink of the cataract!"

"Let me see what I can do with this pole," said Tom.

He seized the pole, and strove to retard the speed of the wagon, but in vain. The long staff flew from under him, ere he could bring any force to bear upon it.

"This is getting serious!" he cried.

He reflected, trying to think of some plan for escaping, but it only lost time.

The two could now plainly see the white water of the cataract, showing through the gloom, not more than five hundred feet beyond.

Meanwhile the force of the current seemed to become greater, the nearer the wagon was drawn toward the perilous brink.

"Oh, what shall we do?" cried Grace, wringing her hands.

"I will try to strike one of the rocks with a rope!" said Tom.

Fastening one end of his rope to a ring in the vehicle, he made a slip-noose at the other end, and threw it.

The noose fell short.

Again he tried, but without success.

The roar of the cataract was now almost deafening, for the dangerous brink was not more than a hundred feet distant.

"We are gone! we are lost!" cried Grace, as the wagon was swept on.

Tom continued to throw the rope, but still without success.

All at once, when the conveyance was within fifty feet of the white, roaring waters, there was a shock, which tarew both Tom and his sister off their feet.

"We have struck on a sand-bank," cried the boy.

"Then we are saved—are we not?" said Grace.

"I hope the bank will hold us."

As he spoke, however, he felt the wagon slowly swinging away from the sandy barrier.

Again he essayed to throw his rope. This time the noose caught about the broken trunk of a sapling. Tom pulled the line taut, and, after the vehicle was drawn further, he perceived that the rope held it.

The furious waters were now roaring and tumbling on both sides of the impaled couple, and it was evident that the slender sapling would soon give way.

"Hark!" cried Grace, laying a hand on her brother's arm. "Did not you hear a shout?"

Tom listened.

"Hoo-whoop! Halloa! halloa! whar are

you?" was faintly borne to the ears of the listeners.

"It is Ned calling us!" said the girl.

"You are right."

Then, clapping both hands to his mouth, Tom answered:

"Here we ar-, adrift! Come and help us, or we will be lost!"

Again the shout was heard, but this time it sounded further off than before.

"He is going away from, instead of coming toward us," said Tom.

He shouted again, but it was evident that his voice, which was not so powerful as Ned's, did not reach the young hunter.

"I noticed a place where the stream branched off, and Ned must have taken that route," said Tom.

"Would he not see your lantern if you waved it?"

"I'm afraid not. There are trees on the bank behind us, where it curves a little, and they would hide the light."

He waved the lantern. Then he fastened it to the end of the pole, and raised it on high.

But it was plain that the light was not seen.

Meanwhile the sapling to which the noose held, swayed and cracked.

It seemed every moment about to give way.

"We will get no help from Ned. I'm sure of that," said Tom.

In fact, the voice of the young hunter, when he shouted, now could hardly be heard, which showed that he was fast increasing the distance between him and his two imperiled friends.

Suddenly a happy thought flashed into Tom's mind.

He went to the box in which the toys and fireworks had thus far been kept dry by means of the rubber cloth.

Opening the lid with a hatchet, he took out a long sky-rocket.

"Good!" cried Grace; clapping her hands. "Ned will see that!"

"Of course he will. That will shoot away up, above the trees, and he can't help seeing it."

He pointed the stick so that it would go slantingly upward from under the cover of the wagon, and lighted the powdered end of the rocket.

There was a hissing sound, a stream of fire, and with a loud whiz up went the fiery flaming signal through the falling rain, the drops of which, catching the lurid light, looked like little balls of gold.

"I'll set off another," said Tom.

He did so, and then the two stood listening.

Several minutes had passed, when both heard the voice of their hunter friend, now drawing nearer.

"Halloa! halloa!"

Just then the sapling cracked louder than before.

"It is giving way," shouted Tom. "The rope is slipping off!"

"We are lost, after all!" cried Grace despairingly.

"Cheer up!" said her brother. "I have another plan, if you will help me."

There were several ropes in the wagon.

Tom fastened the end of one of these to an

anvil, which among other useful utensils, was in the vehicle.

"What are you doing?" inquired the girl.

"I am going to anchor the wagon!"

"It will not hold."

"It will hold long enough, I think, for Ned to reach us!"

Assisted by Grace, he succeeded in rolling the anvil over the edge of the wagon. It struck the stream just as the sapling on the bank gave way.

Tom hauled his anchor-rope taut, and fastened it to the ring in the wagon.

The latter was drawn on, but much slower than before.

"The anchor drags," said Tom, "but I think Ned will be here in time to save us from going over the brink."

He went to the front of the vehicle and, thrusting his pole into the water, was now enabled to retard the headway of the vehicle still more.

CHAPTER III.

AN INTERRUPTION.

"HALLOA! What's de matter mit mein foots?"

Such was the exclamation which broke from Yohon, about a quarter of an hour after the wagon had drifted off with Tom and his sister.

The German had been awakened by the wash of the water, which had risen to the height of the hollow in which he and Ned were lying.

"What's up?" inquired Ned, awakened by his companion's cry.

"Mein foots haf de dropsy mit de water risin'," answered Yohon.

"Halloo! The rain has swollen the stream so that it has come into the hollow!" cried Ned, springing to his feet.

He looked out of the hollow, but he could see nothing of the wagon.

Meanwhile the two horses, up to their knees in water, were neighing and splashing about with their heels.

The young bunter at once comprehended that the wagon was adrift.

He and Yohon having led the horses to a dry place made them fast to a tree, and then started off to look for the vehicle.

They shouted again and again, but heard no response.

Finally they came to a place where another stream branched off from the main one. As it had the swifter current, Ned wrongly judged that the wagon had floated off in this direction.

The two boys ran along the bank, but they saw no sign of the object of their search.

At last they beheld the sky-rocket, shooting far up above the tops of the trees on the bank of the other stream.

"Hyar we are! Now we know how we kin find them!" cried the bunter. "Had the signal been sent up sooner, it would hav been better."

"Mein gollies, what a pity!" exclaimed Yohon.

"What's a pity?"

"Why, dem shky-rockins! Efery one of

dem is worf nine cent apiece, and dere dey's bin wasted!"

As he spoke, another rocket shot into the air. Yohon fairly wrung his hands.

"On, Lord! Eighteen cent gone to de waste! Dere's trouple and expenshe mit makin' dem shky-rockins, and de profit is small; and dere's dat feller t'rowin' dem away as if dey wast not goot for notting at all, already!"

"Pack that, Yohon! It's lucky, I kin tell you, that the rockets warثار to tse. Ef I'm not mistook, the lives of our pards are in danger!"

"And couldn't dey safe dere lifies midout wastin' dem ice rockins?"

To this Ned made no reply. He hurried along, and soon reached the bank of the other stream.

He had not proceeded far when he saw the lantern, and also the white waters of the cataract.

"Quick, Yohon. Shore as you're born our friends are being carried toward a cataract! We hev not a moment to lose!"

"Mein t'unders! I cooms mit de shpeedins of ten t'ousand lightnin's if Miss Grace is in der purr!" cried Yohon, as he quickened his pace.

His legs were short, and as he was very stout, he stumbled and fell flat, bumping his nose against a rock.

"Ah! ah! mein nose is prokens!" he howled. "Coom here, Ned, and helpins me up, for I dinks de knee-pans am prokens, too."

The hunter, however, sped on, but he had not gone many paces when he beheld half a dozen pairs of fierce eyeballs gleaming through the darkness, from behind a rocky ledge, just ahead of him.

Ned quickly crouched, and well it was that he did so, for the whiz of several deadly shafts now was heard, as they cut the air above him.

"Injuns!" cried the boy as he turned and bounded toward the thicket from which he had lately emerged.

He met Yohon running toward him, full tilt, and the bodies of the two came together with a loud thud.

"Ach!" grunted Yohon. "Mein nose est now double prokens! Canst you see where you es goin's?"

Whiz! whiz! came two more long arrows, the point of one grazing the speaker's already injured nose.

"Tunder! Was est der matter mit noses dis night, already?" howled the boy.

"Injuns!" yelled Ned, with such terrific force in Yohon's ear that the little Dutch lad believed one of the arrows had passed through the side of his head. "Come, that's fallen timber in the thicket, and that we kin make a stand!"

"Shtand! shtand! I cannot not shtand mit a hole in mein knee-pans!"

"Well, then, run, ef you're afear'd, and leave me in the lurch!"

"No! no! I runs if you runs, but I makes no run if you not makes him, too!"

"Good! Come on, then!"

And, seizing Yohon by the arm, Ned half dragged the limping boy toward the thicket.

They soon gained the pile of fallen timber, when, freeing his rifle from the rubber sheath,

in which he had kept it dry, the lad pointed it toward his foes.

"How many est dere?" coolly inquired Yohon, as he also freed and cocked his piece.

"Half a doz-n, I reckon. Wait till they git nearer, 'fore yer fire!"

"Bah! I plazes away now!" answered the Dutch youth, as he pulled trigger.

The outline of a hideous form was seen to leap up from the bank along which it had been approaching on hands and knees. A horrible gurgling sort of grunt was heard as this figure fell upon its head.

"Well done, Yohon!" said Ned. "You're a good shot for a toymaker."

"I plogos him, you can bets. I's a needle-gun poy, I is."

As he spoke he proceeded to reload.

Meanwhile Ned was watching his chance.

All at once he saw a head projecting above a log on his right, and a long arrow pointed toward him.

The ring of his piece was heard, and the savage fell back, his arrow flying up into the air, as a bullet passed through his breast.

"The varmints will be more keerful now," said the hunter; "but we kin not afford to lose time, ef we'd save that poor girl and her brother. We must try to git round 'em in the dark, so as to strike the place whar the wagon has drifted."

"I proofs of dat plans," answered Yohon. "We must safen der girl, if we die mit der attempts."

"Come, then," said Ned, agreeably surprised to discover that he had with him so plucky a companion.

They stole away from the timber, and finally passed round a rock to the right of the bank, without being seen by the savages.

Then they again made toward the stream; but as they approached it they saw the outlines of many dark forms on the shore.

The Indians perceived them at the same time, and with hideous yells, they now came making toward them.

"Too bad!" cried Ned, sadly. "We cannot reach our friends, and I fear they will be drawn over the cataract."

"Ach! t'ousand t'unders, it est too bad!" answered Yohon.

The two sped on away from the Indians, and finally concealed themselves in a hollow, among fragments of rocks, hoping that their pursuers would pass them.

The hollow being hidden by shrubbery, the Indians glided by without seeing them.

Then they emerged from their hiding-place, to behold a number of their foes, apparently on watch, between them and the stream.

At the same moment they heard the neighing of horses on their right, and beheld a couple of dim forms leading off Tom's team.

"The thievin' varmints! they shall not hev the horses, if I kin purvent it," said Ned.

"No, dey moost not haf der horses!" said Yohon. "Dem is goot peasts, worf a hundred dollar apiece; but how canst we safe dem?"

"Follow me," whispered Ned.

Crouching, the two glided off after the savages, who had possession of the team.

"Apaches!" whispered the hunter when they were close to their foes. "They are both young braves. We must work quick, but without noise. You have your knife, Yohon?"

"Yes, yes; I haf him all right," answered the boy, as he drew the weapon from his belt.

"You take the chap on your left, an' I'll see to the one on the right," said the hunter. "Follow me; now is our time," he added, as the two young savages, turning into a path, had their backs to him. He sprung toward the Indians as he spoke.

Yohon attempted to follow, but his foot caught a rocky protuberance, and he fell heavily against one of the Apaches.

"Hay! what a blunders!" he muttered, "but it won't safe yer paddins," he continued, as he caught the savage by the throat with both hands.

The two fell to the ground in a struggle. Yohon tried to use his knife, but his antagonist was too quick for him, and he had lifted his tomahawk to brain him, when Ned, who had knocked the other Indian senseless with a blow from the butt of his pistol, served the second one in the same manner.

A yell behind the two indicated that they had been seen.

"Can you ride?" inquired Ned of the Dutch boy.

"Yes, mit or mitout der saddle," was the reply.

"Good! Come, then! Hyar are the Apaches after us, on horseback, too!"

Yohon got upon a rock, and thence threw himself on one of the horses, while Ned mounted another.

"Now, Yohon, we'll streak it. Thar's 'bout fifty of the varmints behind us. I didn't think thar war so many."

The two urged their horses forward, and away they went, with the speed of a whirlwind, the whoops and yells of their pursuers ringing in their ears.

CHAPTER IV.

UNEXPECTED FOES.

It was the sight of the rockets, sent up by Tom Derrick from the wagon which had drawn a roving band of some fifty Apache warriors to the banks of the stream.

"Have they come at last? I think I see our two friends," said Grace, noticing a couple of dim forms stealing along the shore.

"That's good," said Tom. "This way, Ned and Yohon. Here we are!" he added, raising his voice.

At that moment the sharp crack of rifles, further up the stream, was heard, followed by the wild yells of Indians.

"Oh! dear, what does that mean?" gasped the girl.

Tom peered through the gloom, and, raising his lantern a little, he was enabled to faintly make out the two forms on the shore as those of savages.

"Jerusalem!" he ejaculated, "we are in for it, now. Those are not our friends; they are Apache red-skins!"

"Then our fate will be worse, even than I

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expected," gasped his sister. "Better would it be for us to be killed by going down with the cataract, than to fall into the hands of those horrible people!"

On hearing the yells of their comrades, the two savages had securely fastened the rope which had been about the sapling, to a spur of rock, so that the wagon was now firmly held. Tom had seen the Indians do this; then he noticed that they ran off in the direction of the rifle-shots.

"They have left us, at any rate, for the present," he said.

"But they know we cannot get ashore, and they will come back for us."

"I reckon so."

"Can we do nothing to escape them?"

"I will try."

As he spoke, the boy cut loose the rope which held the anvil, causing the wagon to drift nearer to the brink of the cataract.

Then he seized the rope which was secured to the rock, and commenced to haul upon it.

In this way, assisted by the water, he drew the vehicle close to the bank.

"Now we can get out and run away," said Grace.

"I am not going to leave my goods," said Tom. "I mean to take the wagon with me."

"How can you do that? You can not pull it up on the bank."

"No, but a horse can," and, as he spoke, Tom pointed to one of the Indians' horses tied to a tree, a few paces off.

"Oh, Tom, we only lose time. Our lives are worth more than personal property.

"The varmints shall not get my things, if I know myself," was the resolute answer.

Having sprung out and hauled in the slack of the rope, with which he took some extra turns about the rocky spur, the boy went to the horse, loosened it, and led it to the shore.

It did not take him long to hitch the rope to the animal. Then he urged the latter forward, and in a few minutes the wagon was drawn upon the bank.

By this time the rain had ceased to fall, and, the clouds having broken, there was a dim light to show the two travelers how they were situated.

They were on the summit of a hill, which had a smooth, gradual slope to a plain below, covered with tall, waving grass.

"That grass will hide us at night from our enemies," said Tom.

"But it would not take them long to find us."

"No, not if they looked for us."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean they will not look for us. I will leave the rope so that it will have the appearance of having parted, and the savages will think it broke, and that we were carried over the falls."

"But the horse? They will miss the horse."

"No, for I mean to leave the horse where I found it."

"How, then, can we reach the plain below us?"

"Easily. There is slope enough for the wagon, if once started, to run down the hill, by itself."

So saying, the lad having first cut the rope in

so jagged a manner as to make it look as if it had been broken, led the horse far enough to bring the wheels of the conveyance on the slope. He then took the animal back to the place whence he had conducted it, and secured it to the tree as he had found it.

A vigorous push on the wagon now sent it rolling down the hill, the boy climbing into the back part of it as it went.

It soon struck the bottom of the hill, and the impetus it had thus received sent it forward for some paces into the long grass.

"Here we are, as snug as you please," said Tom. "All we have now to do is to keep quiet."

"But suppose the Apaches should take a notion to come this way?"

"They will not—at least not at present. If I'm not mistaken, they are after Ned and Yohon."

"Oh, Tom, he will be killed!"

"No, no, Yohon is a plucky boy, but he is careful, too."

"Ned?"

"Yes."

"Humph! You must not think too much of him. He has not a good trade, like Yohon, and is not nearly so saving."

"I don't know what you mean," said Grace, coldly.

"Well, then, I'll be frank with you. I think Yohon would make you a better husband than Ned."

"Fie!" half laughed his companion, "who was speaking of husbands? That is just like a boy! The moment a girl shows one a little kindness, all the others think she wants to marry him."

"Pack it, 'sis,' we'll say no more about it, then. I hope both our friends can save themselves!"

"Well, here we are, talking, when we ought to be silent. The savages may hear us."

"I reckon not, with that cataract roaring on our left."

Tom had previously extinguished his lantern, and he now leaned forward, peering over the grass at the hill-top.

He saw several dusky forms there, and by their manner, as well as he could discern in the dim light, he judged that these savages were commenting on the supposed loss of the wagon, which they evidently thought had been carried over the falls.

Finally they disappeared, and, not long after, the yells and whoops of the whole band in pursuit of Ned and Yohon, were heard in the distance.

"We have shaken them off nicely," said Tom. "They are going further from us, every moment."

"By the noise I should judge they were after our friends," remarked the girl.

"Yes, so I think. I hope they are on my team. Those are good, swift horses."

The boy now got out of the conveyance, and, with the assistance of Grace, he contrived to draw the vehicle still further into the grass.

Then, re-entering it, the young woman en-

devoured to compose herself to sleep, while her brother stood watch.

At last Grace fell asleep, and did not awaken until morning, when she beheld Tom, seated with his head against the side of the vehicle, in a deep slumber.

"Poor brother," she murmured, "I will not rouse him."

It was a clear morning, and the sun was just rising, the lurid rays falling on the waters of the cataract to the left, tinting them and weaving little rainbows in the spray.

Grace shuddered as she reflected what would have been her and her brother's fate had they gone over the perilous brink, which was nearly forty feet above the lower stream into which the cataract fell.

Sharp, jagged rocks there received the falling sheets of foaming waters, and on these rugged masses, the wagon, with its occupants, would have been dashed had it been drawn much further than it was.

Higher rose the sun, and Tom soon opened his eyes.

"Halloo! did I fall asleep?" he inquired.

"Yes, you did."

"Well, what's up? Any sign of the Injuns?"

"No."

Tom rose and took a good look over the waving grass.

Trees and mountains in the distance were slightly veiled by a thin mist.

"Nothing in sight. Let's have breakfast."

From a basket Grace took some provisions, which she set out on the toy-box. Both the young people had good appetites, and did full justice to the meal.

"Hope Ned and Yohon are all right," said Tom.

"I believe they are," said Grace. "I had a good dream about them."

"Oh, yes; you believe in dreams."

"To a certain extent I do. I dreamed they both came to us with our team, and hitched it to the wagon."

"I hope to gracious *that* part of the dream will come true, for we cannot budge until we have the horses."

A couple of hours passed. Finally Tom ventured to mount the hill, whence he obtained a good view of the country on all sides.

All at once he was startled by the frightened voice of his sister, calling him:

"Oh, Tom! come quick—quick!"

The boy darted down the hill. As he drew near the wagon in which Grace was seated, he heard a rushing noise in the grass, with which were blended several angry growls.

He was soon in the vehicle, to see his sister pointing ahead.

There the lad beheld two pairs of flaming, bloodshot eyes, with long, ferocious-looking heads half-hidden by the grass.

"Bears!" he cried. "I'll soon fix them."

"But the Indians! Suppose some of them were near enough to hear your firing?"

"That's so! We can't be too careful, situated as we are now. I must use the spear."

As he spoke, he picked up a spear which, among other things, he had brought with him. This spear had a rope attached to the end of it.

The boy had thought he might, in the course of the journey, have a chance to take some fish with it.

"The bears have scented our provisions," he remarked. "That is what has brought them here."

"Suppose we throw them the provisions. Better they should eat those things than us."

Tom laughed.

"They'll not eat either, if I know what I'm about!"

"Oh, Tom, you are not used to bears! You never killed one in your life."

"I am going to kill *two*, now," he replied.

CHAPTER V.

THE RAFT.

AWAY went Ned Transom and his companion, Yohon, as previously stated.

The horses they bestrode were good, swift ones, but it seemed to them that the Apaches gained upon them.

Although Ned was well acquainted with the country, yet he was a little puzzled to find his way in the dark.

Finally, however, he struck the plain at the base of the hills, and then it was smooth riding.

The rain having by this time ceased to fall, the stars gave a dim light, by which the hunter could just make out the squat little form of his companion, with his full moon-like face, and his blue eyes twinkling between rolls of fat.

"Tunder!" ejaculated the Dutch boy, "dis ridin' gif's a feller appetites, and dere's all dem bologna been left in der wagon, excep', what I haf's mit me!"

"This, it 'pears to me, is no time fur thinkin' of the stomach!" said Ned.

"Ach! hoombug! it's de ferry time fur de dinkins ob dat, mit de bowels all shakin', as if dey wast fightin' to see which wast de best feller in der puddin'-bag!"

"Well, cheer up, Yohon. I hope we'll git back to the wagon, sometime, to-morrow."

"Yes, if we no losin' de hair. Dem Injes gi's up mit us—ue?"

"Yes, they are gainin'—thar's a fact. Wind up yer 'gristle,' Yohon, fur I'm goin' to make a jump that'll try yer some, pooty soon."

"Der joomo?"

"Yes, 'bout half a mile further on, thar's a ravine, nineteen feet wide, and ten deep, through which thar runs a rapid stream. Thar was a raft thar, hitched to a tree, which me and my pards left thar, 'fore I comed to the settlement to be an escort fur my friend Tom and his sister. I think we are goin' the right way to strike it."

"How canst you tell mit de dark?"

"Thar's sart'in marks which I know—the old, dead tree we passed, jest now, and this big boulder we are passing, at present."

"You goin' to joomp de horse on dem raft?"

"Yes, ef it's still thar."

"Mein gollies! dat will shakes a feller up some."

Ten minutes later, dashing through a willow thicket, the two arrived on the edge of the ravine.

Below him, in the obscurity, Ned made out the raft.

"Hyar she is, all right," he cried to Yohon, and, the next moment, urging his horse forward, he brought the animal dexterously upon the raft, which was about twelve feet in area, and made of logs, closely lashed together.

Yohon endeavored to follow. Down he came, but a splash and a gurgle betokened that he had struck the stream.

"Gif us a lifts, Ned," he said. "I cooms ploomps mit de water!"

As he was close alongside of the raft, Ned caught his horse by the bridle, and jerking upon it, soon had the animal on the raft.

Yohon had fallen off, and the current had carried him under the raft.

"Hello! he's a gone coon, ef I don't work sharp!" cried the hunter.

He was about to plunge into the stream, when, through an opening, in the center of the raft, he saw something rise, round and dark.

In an instant, he recognized the seat of Yohon's pants, and, seizing the slack with both hands, he pulled the little Dutch boy, gasping and sputtering, up through the opening between the logs.

"Ach! tear, I's a drowned rat! I's dead, already!" gasped Yohon, as soon as he could speak. "I makes no more joomps like dem. Dere's a gallons and a half of water in der stoomick!"

"It was a narrow escape—you kin be shore of that!" answered Ned, as he proceeded to untie the rope which held the platform of logs to the stump of a tree on the bank.

The raft was now carried swiftly along by the curr-nt, and, when it was far down the stream, Ned could make out the forms of the Apache horsemen, who were plunging into the ravine to swim across, thinking the fugitives had kept on.

Soon after the Indians were seen going to the westward, and were, a few minutes later, lost to view in the gloom beyond.

"Thar you are! we've got rid of them var-mints for the present, and now we'll git back to our two friends."

"We canst not gitten back to dem goin's from dem," said Yohon. "I 'fraits I nefer sees Miss Grace again," he added, with a heavy sigh.

"We will see both Grace and her brother, if they hev not been carried over that 'farnal cataract, which war ahead on 'em!"

"Mein gollies! I 'fraits dey been carried over dem!" cried Yohon.

"Thar was a sand-bank, which I've hopes stepped the wagon. I know that stream well."

"Tank de Lort!" said Yohon, putting a hand on his heart, "den I may sees de girl—dat angel-fleisch—once more!"

"The stream we are on has a long, winding course. After awhile, it flows into another, which will take us to where the one into which the cataract falls will meet it. Then all we hev to do will be to git off the raft, and a ride off half a mile will bring us to the falls."

"Goot! I den sees mein apple of der eye—mein heart-blossom, mein sweet Grace!"

"Pack it, Yohon. You're not in love with that gal?"

"I lofs her more dan life—more as de best tings in der world—and I means to haf her for mein frau!"

"That is, ef she'll hev you."

"Haf me—yes. You dinks she wouldn't haf me?"

"Of course I don't know fur shore, but you mustn't be disappointed ef she doesn't."

"I would die mit de grief and de tears! T'ousand t'unders! her brudder proofs ob der matches."

Then all at once his eyes flashed.

"You dinks she likens you? No?"

"I did not say so, but I kin sw'ar that I like her—hev liked her fur a long time."

"You fools. What you dink? She not lookins at you?"

"Easy, thar, Yohon; I don't like to be called a fool!"

"Well, I donts not care for dat. I say you est a fool, if you beliefs she habens you for one loosband. She gifens you de sack very quick, ifs so you try her. I wants you to promise you not make der try—no?"

And as he spoke, Yohon shook his clinched fist in Ned's face.

"Take your fist away, ef you please!" said Ned, pushing the boy from him.

This enraged the Dutch lad, who was really jealous of the young hunter, and he now made a blow at him.

Ned seized him by the collar with one hand—by the waistband with the other and slung him across his hap, to the platform of the raft. Yohon scrambled to his feet.

"Coom!" he cried, "one of us not leafs dis raft alive! Draw and defends mit yourself!" he added, as he pulled out his knife.

The other youth drew his, and, at the first stroke made by his opponent, he sent his blade flying off into the stream.

"Well!" cried Yohon, "you hafs de best of me, now, but we may fight again sometime."

"Any time you like," said Ned, who could now hardly keep from laughing at the appearance presented by his companion, whose face, between the eyes and on each cheek, was streaked with mud, against which it had come in contact during his struggles to get upon the raft.

The latter drifted on with the current, and Yohon, who sat on a log a few feet from the hunter, finally dropped to sleep.

Ned also felt drowsy, but he knew that it was necessary to remain awake, and he managed to keep a good watch.

All at once, Yohon sprung up with a yell, rubbing his seat!

"What's the matter?" inquired his companion.

"You beens playin' jokes on me, no? You prickens mein hams mit a knife!"

"Not a bit of it! I don't understand you."

"Somed'ings been bitens mein hams, and wakens me!" said Yohon, looking around him.

"You must hev dreamed it. Nothing has been near you!"

"Den dere's a shpider or somed'ings mit dat log. I feelings him, plain enough."

Ned advanced and looked at the log, but he could see nothing.

Yohon sat down, and again endeavored to compose himself to sleep. Suddenly he jumped up a second time, as before giving vent to a loud yell.

He turned quickly, to perceive, in the dim light, a spear, as it was hastily withdrawn into the water between the logs.

In an instant he plunged his arm between the opening in the timber, and clutched the top-knot of an Indian boy, who had been floating along beneath the raft, unknown to its occupants.

"Hah! mein fine fellers! I hais you, now!" cried the Dutch lad.

The young savage made a dart at him with his spear, but his opponent avoided it, and jerked the weapon from his grasp.

Yohon had now pulled his foe upon the raft, and a desperate struggle ensued between them.

The supple Indian was soon astride of the Dutch youth, his drawn knife in his right hand, raised for a deadly blow.

Ned, who, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, had fallen into a doze, knew nothing of what was going on, and his companion now believed that his fate was sealed.

Down came the knife, but Yohon managed to twist himself, receiving the blade along the skin of his ribs.

Having no knife of his own, he had recourse to a huge bologna-sausage in his pocket, with which he dealt the savage a sounding thwack across the ear.

The sausage being hard and stale, the stroke was sufficient to partially stun the Indian, who, relaxing his hold of his foe, afforded him a chance to rise.

As he did so, the Apache gave a yell, and was about to aim a second stroke with his knife at his antagonist. The latter, however, drove the stale sausage, with all his force, down the throat of the boy, who, unaccustomed to this mode of combat and feeling himself choking, sprung backward.

The yell of the Indian awoke Ned, who ran at once toward the twain, but, the young Indian leaped into the stream, and a moment later, was out of sight.

Yohon now explained what had happened, to his companion.

"This is unfornunit'l!" said Ned. "That chap was probably one of the spies of the Apaches, and he'll now go after the gang, and tell 'em whar we are."

During the rest of the night, a good watch was kept by each of the lads, in his turn.

Morning came, at last, to show them that, by this time, they had drifted close to the stream near which they were to disembark and take to their horses.

Just at sunrise, making the raft fast to the trunk of a willow, on the bank, Ned led his horse to land, while Yohon took charge of the other animal.

The two were seen mounted, riding toward the cataract, the noise of which could be heard in the distance, although it was hidden from sight by a mist.

CHAPTER VI.

A FIERY RACE.

TOM DERRICK, holding his spear firmly, watch-

ed the two bears, as they came on toward the wagon.

When they were within a few feet of it, growling and showing their teeth, he hurled his weapon.

The barbed instrument passed slantingly through the neck of the beast, but the latter came on as if heedless of the wound.

Tom drew back the spear, and threw it again, but this time one of the bears caught it in his mouth, and snapped off the handle with his strong teeth.

Both animals, growling fiercely, drew near the wagon.

"They will attack us! We cannot help ourselves, now!" cried Grace, in alarm.

"I'll have to use the rifle," said Tom, "there's no other way."

He pointed it at the head of the foremost bear, and fired.

Before the boy could reload, both bears were upon their hind feet, with their fore-paws on the edge of the vehicle, about to spring in.

Tom struck each a powerful blow on the head with the stock of the rifle, but this served only to enrage them.

They strove to get into the wagon, but the heavy awkward bodies kept slipping back.

Perceiving that the blows he dealt them would not keep them away, and that they would soon effect an entrance into the vehicle, Tom again reloaded his piece. On endeavoring to fire, he discovered that the powder was at present so dampened by the recent rain that it would not ignite. He then looked for an ax which he had brought with him, but he discovered that this was under so many things that ere he could reach it, his shaggy enemies would be in the conveyance.

"Here they come! They will soon be upon us!" gasped the girl, as the two brutes half lifted their forms over the edge of the wagon. "We can do nothing!"

And she wrung her hands.

Tom's gaze fell on the toy-box, and a sudden thought struck him. He opened the lid, took out four packs of fire-crackers, connected them by means of a slender piece of rope, and lighting them, flung a couple over the back of each bear.

The reports of the "crackers," as they exploded, was heard the next moment, and as the sparks and sheets of fire flew about their bodies, heads and eyes, the bears, bewildered and half-blinded, dropped to the ground, trotting off snarling and growling.

"Hooray! there they go! That was a good way to get rid of 'em. I'll get out a patent for that," cried Tom.

As the bears ran off into the long grass, the girl breathed a sigh of relief.

"I am so glad we are rid of them," she said, "but will they not come back?"

"If they do, we have plenty more of the crackers for them."

Suddenly Grace clasped her hands, and gave a cry of alarm.

"Seel!" she said. "The grass!—the dry grass!"

Tom then saw flames rising from it. The fire-crackers had ignited it.

The sparks, blown about by the wind, set fire to the grass nearly on all sides of the wagon.

"I must put it out," cried the boy, in alarm.

He sprung out, holding in his hand a scrub-broom, with which he endeavored to beat down the fire, but in vain.

The wagon now was almost surrounded by the flames, which, in fact, spreading, threatened to set fire to the whole expanse of prairie land.

Tom endeavored, with Grace's assistance, to drag the wagon to the hill; but a long tongue of flame shooting out now, set fire to the grass in that direction, and the young people were obliged to abandon their attempt.

"We will have to leave the wagon to its fate," said Tom. "There'll be an explosion when the sparks strike the toy-box, and I will lose the work of many months."

"It seems to me we now have to think of saving our lives," cried the girl. "The whole prairie is on fire, and we will have to run before it."

"Right," answered the boy; "and we will have to make a start now."

They had gone only a few paces, when, to their dismay, they perceived that it would be impossible for them to escape the rapidly advancing flames by running!

"We will perish!" cried Grace.

Grasping her arm, Tom urged her on, but she was soon exhausted, and was obliged to pause for breath.

The boy then gave up all hope. The flames were closing in upon the two, but, on the right Tom noticed a space—that which led toward the vehicle, still remaining untouched by the fire.

"There is no other way!" he cried. "We will have to run the gauntlet of the flames and throw ourselves into the stream. There are hollows along the bank into which we can crouch, and in that way partly avoid the blaze."

"We will be burned to death in the attempt," said Grace. "How can we get through to the stream?"

"I will wrap some canvas taken from the wagon, about us."

Grace shook her head. In fact it seemed impossible to rush through such an avalanche of fire without fatal results.

"Hark!" cried Tom, suddenly.

"What is it?"

"I thought I heard shouts in the distance, off there in the mist and smoke," said the boy.

"Yes, I, too, hear them now!" answered Grace.

The noises drew nearer; a few minutes later, two horsemen were seen rapidly approaching, waving their arms as they shouted.

One of them, short and squat, bobbed rapidly up and down, the other sat his horse more firmly.

"Yohon and Ned!" cried the girl, joyfully.

"Yes—here they come, sure enough!" exclaimed Tom.

"Step aside, ef you please," said the young hunter, as he drew nearer.

"Can you save us?" cried Grace.

"Yes, you and the wagon, too," answered Ned.

"You think you can save the wagon, too? that is good news, indeed!" shouted Tom.

"Yes, we safes not only der blossom of mein loves, but we safes all der toys mit it, which is worf more t'an two hundred tolairs!" cried Yohon.

Grace looked vexed at the Dutch boy's compliment to herself.

"T'ank de Lord!" continued the lad. "I sees you, Miss Grace, safen and well. Midout seeing dat," he added, laying a hand on his heart, "I not gifens mooch for de good t'ings of de world—no, not even for bologna, Switzer cheese, nor odder d'ings dat's good mit der eatings."

"Come on," cried Ned, as he dashed up to the wagon and sprung from his horse. "We've no time to lose, I kin tell you!"

Grace and her brother were soon in the conveyance, to which the two horses were then hitched.

Ned and Yohon got in, and Tom urged the animals forward at their swiftest pace.

The flames flung their sparks from under the hind wheels as they proceeded. It was a close race!

"Do you think we will escape?" Grace anxiously inquired, as a rising of the wind blew the flames still more rapidly toward the fugitives.

"Ef the horses hold, thar's not the least doubt of it," said Ned.

"Am I going the right way?" queried Tom.

"Yes, you are. About two miles from hyar, thar's a wooded hill, with a path, up which we kin drive. Then we'll be safe enough, you kin be shore."

The wind kept increasing, and the fire seemed fairly to have wings, so fast did it come on.

Roaring and snapping, it ran along, now and then throwing sparks into the wagon.

"Look out for the toy-box," said Tom to Yohon.

The latter wrapped an extra fold of canvas about it.

"Him's all right," he said. "We safes him, and I hopes you not been use any more of dem fireworks, which was a washte—a pitiful washte. Eighteen cent gone to der smash!"

"I've wasted four packs of fire-crackers, besides," said Tom.

And he went on to explain how he had used them to drive off the bears.

"That war a splendid idea!" said Ned. "I'm sorry, though, I war not thar. I'd hev had the skins and the meat of the critters, ef I had been."

Yohon groaned.

"Four pack of dem crackers! It is awful to dinks off! Forty cent for dem crackers—forty cent, and den eighteen for dem sky-rockins, making fifty-eight cent in all! Mein gollies! I est more dan haf a tollar!"

"That will do, Yohon," said Tom. "Whi h would you have preferred?—to have had Grace eaten up by the bears, or to lose forty cents?"

"Dere shouldst haf been no eatins and no washte, nider! Why, t'under! had I been here, I would haf shoten dem bears 'fore dey could say Jack Rob-der-son!"

CHAPTER VII.

PRISONERS.

THE team mad good progress, and, at length, the travelers had left the fire many yards behind them.

A few hours later they reached the hill of which Ned had spoken.

It was easy to ascend, until they arrived about half-way from the base to the summit, when their further progress was hindered by lofty, rugged masses of rocks, rising directly in their path.

Meanwhile Ned had kept his gaze upon some dark objects, visible far away, beyond the burning prairie.

"What's you lookins at, Ned?" inquired Yohon.

"I kin see Injuns," was the answer, "and ef I'm not mistaken, they're those 'tarnal Apaches."

"Do you think they have seen us?" said Grace.

"No, I don't think they hev, on account of the smoke this way, but it don't take them varmints long to find a trail, and a good watch must be kept."

He left the wagon, and ascended to the summit of the hill.

Then he perceived that the Indians were approaching the elevation by a circuitous route, which would enable them to clear the fire.

He returned to his friends, and made an examination of the rocks, on one side of which he discovered a large cavern.

"Hyar's whar we'd better go fur the present, until we see what those niggers are goin' to do," he said.

He took the horses by the bridles and led them forward into the cave, which was large enough to hold three wagons.

"Thar, p'raps, ef we keep shady, the Injuns will pass 'bout seeing us," he said. "Yohon, you an' I kin keep watch while Tom stays hyar with Miss Grace."

He and the Dutch boy then went to the summit of the hight, leaving Tom and his sister in the cave.

From behind a rock, the two watchers kept their gaze upon the savages. The latter came on, and finally, passed the hill, apparently without suspecting that the whites were there.

"Goot dey goes away, alreaty, and now we canst go back to Miss Grace," said Yohon.

"Not yet."

As he spoke, Ned saw the Apaches enter a deep thicket, but whether they remained there or whether they passed through it, he could not determine from his present position, for there were numbers of mounds of earth beyond the woods, which would have hidden the horsemen from sight, even had they ridden in that direction.

"Come, Yohon, we must get nearer the varmints, and find out what they're doing," he said.

"All right, I's ready," answered the Dutch lad, examining his rifle, which he had lately loaded afresh, to see if it was in good condition.

The two boys descended the hill, and, creeping along through some shrubbery which ex-

tended from its base to the woods, were soon close to the latter.

Ned peered into the shadowy depths, but he could see no sign of his foes.

Closely followed by Yohon, he glided into the thicket.

There was a small tree with branches which grew close to the ground. The young hunter cautiously climbed among the branches. He had nearly reached the top of the tree, and had caught sight of the savages, squatting near their horses, on the ground, not a hundred feet distant, when Yohon, who had undertaken to follow him, suddenly gave a cry as a slender bough broke from under him.

"Ach! t'under!" he exclaimed, "I brokes my neck sure, alreaty!"

Down he went as a twig he endeavored to clutch gave way in his grasp, falling about ten feet, and landing upon his seat, in a muddy puddle of water.

The little hollow contained, in fact, a mud so thick and pasty, that Yohon there stuck fast for some minutes, kicking his short legs in his efforts to free himself.

"Helps, Ned, helps! I shticks in dis hole as ifs I wass in one pots of glue!"

"Hist!" cried the hunter from above. "Injuns are right ahead of us!"

"Mein gollies! dere's all de more reasons I haf for gettin's out of dis! Canst you do noottings for me—no?"

The Apaches sprung to their feet and stood in a listening attitude. Evidently all had heard Yohon fall, if not the cries he afterward uttered.

With snake-like movements they soon came gliding toward the tree, their drawn tomahawks in their hands.

The young hunter quickly descended, pulled Yohon from the mud-hole, and bidding him follow, crawled swiftly off to a heap of leaves under a bank. Among these leaves he hid himself, and his companion did the same.

Seeing no one, the Indians returned to the place where they had left their horses.

Suddenly, however, they all turned, and mounting their steeds, moved toward the base of the hill on which the wagon was concealed.

"Thar they go," whispered Ned. "They are between us and the hill."

"Ach! What canst we do now? We must go to der rescues of Miss Grace. Dey finds der wagon—no?"

"We'll try to follow them and see what they do. Perhaps they are only going to hev a good look at the fire."

The two contrived, unobserved, to follow the savages.

The latter commenced to ascend the hill.

All at once Ned fancied he heard a slight movement in the shrubbery, close behind him.

He turned quickly, but ere he could use his rifle something came whizzing through the air, striking him slantingly on the head, cutting a gash and almost stunning him. It was a tomahawk, hurled by one of a party of half a dozen Apaches, who had been concealed in the thicket and had noticed every movement of the two boys.

A moment later they surrounded the lads, making them prisoners, binding their hands and feet with thongs.

Yohon, who had had no time to raise his weapon, felt it jerked out of his hand and found himself a captive in a second.

The savages, with the exception of a piece of skin fastened about the middle, were naked. Mostly armed with spears and tomahawks, they also carried shields.

"Ach!" cried the Dutch lad. "You cooms like de spirits! How you cooms so quick-bev?"

"Indian very quick," said one of the party; "got good eye. See boys when first come in wood. Think perhaps more somewhere. Wait and watch!"

"You hafs takens us by surprise!" cried Yohon; "but what's you wants to take for? We never harms you."

"All white people Apache foe! Apache like much kill all white people. Going to take boys and roast over fire!"

"T'under! dat woulds be no use! More petter you lets us go!"

By this time Ned had recovered his senses.

"We're in for it now, Yohon, and that's no mistake!"

"Well, dere's no helps for it, I shpose," said the Dutch lad, philosophically.

The Indians conducted the boys into the woods and left them there, guarded by two savages, while the rest went on to join those who were ascending the hill, and to inform them of the capture.

"They'll find our friends," said Ned. "I'm mou'y afraid o' that, and then they'll either scalp the gal, or force her to marry one of ther band!"

"Ach! dat's what moost kill me in der ends!" ejaculated Yohon, "to vink of mein sweet blossom marrying mit one of dem! It shoot not be so no more, and I nots haf it so!"

He struggled frantically with his bonds, but he could make no impression upon them.

The two Apaches watched his movements without any sign of emotion, except a fierce triumphant glitter of the eyes.

Lying near him on the ground, Ned saw the blade of a broken knife which, evidently, had been thrown away by one of the savages. The blade had become fixed in the earth, with the edge uppermost, and the hunter thought that, by moving his bonds cautiously over it, he might succeed in severing them.

Turning over, he allowed the thongs to rest upon the blade, which, half concealed by grass, was not visible to the guard from where they now stood.

The captive commenced to move the thongs, almost imperceptibly, so that the Indians had no suspicion of what he was doing.

Finally he was gratified to feel the bonds give way, but he still had those about his ankles to get rid of ere he could rise.

How was this to be done?

The savages would see him the instant he should endeavor to untie the cords.

After a moment's reflection, he said to his companion:

"Yohon, I reckin I've lost my gold watch.

I must hav dropped it in the place whar I was captured!"

"You hafs a golt watch?" cried the Dutch boy. "I dinks I—"

The hunter nudged him, and, taking the hint, Yohon continued:

"I dinks I hab seen him! I sees somedings drop mit de grass, but I did not know it wast der golt watch!"

The Indians pricked up their ears, and exchanged glances. Then, casting a look at the captives, to make sure they were so situated that they could not escape, both savages darted toward the place where the boys had been made prisoners.

"Thar they go, and now's our time," said Ned.

He quickly unfastened the lashings about his ankles, then he drew a knife from his hunting-shirt, and severed those which held Yohon.

"T'under! if dis ain't goot!" ejaculated the Dutch boy. "We soon gits off now."

"This way," said Ned, as he crept behind a bush, and then darted forward. The two kept on, until, suddenly the yells of the savages betokened that the escape had been discovered.

"Thar's a settlement, not ten miles off," cried the young hunter. "Once thar, we will be safe enough, and I can lead a party to try to rescue our friends if they're taken."

The cries of those in pursuit were heard. Ned, followed by Yohon, finally glided into a natural archway, formed by a mass of rocks, and crept up a ledge on one side.

"Why you goes dere?" asked his companion.

"It commands the archway. When the two savages enter, we can throw a couple of rocks down upon their heads, and so get possession of their rifles."

"But supposin' dem fullers comes up de ledge?"

"It will make no difference. We will hav a chance to throw the rocks at them, and, if you aim straight we'll hit 'em, 'fore they kin see us."

The two crouched on the ledge, each provided with a large piece of rock, and soon, as they had expected, the two Indians came rushing through the archway, thinking the fugitives had moved on.

"Now," said Ned.

The missiles descended on the heads of the twain, who dropped senseless.

The next moment the boys had taken possession of their own rifles and ammunition-pouches, which were those the savages had brought with them.

"Goot!" cried Yohon. "Now we hafs our rifles for usin' if we has to do de fightings."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ATTACK.

THE Apaches who ascended the hill, soon noticed the marks made by the hoofs of Tom's team, and by the wheels of his wagon.

Meanwhile, both the boy and his sis'er became alarmed at the protracted absence of their friends.

"Oh, Tom, I am afraid something serious has happened to them," said Grace.

"I will go to look if I can see anything of them," responded the lad.

He got out of the wagon, but, hardly had he reached the opening of the cave, when he saw, below him, the advancing party of savages.

He quickly returned to the vehicle, and told Grace that the Indians were coming.

"We are lost, then," said the girl, turning pale.

"Perhaps if we remain quiet, they will not think to look in the cave," remarked Tom.

He had found some dry cartridges, and soon had his rifle loaded.

Crouching behind a roll of canvas, in the back of the wagon, he kept his gaze upon the entrance of the cavern.

"Would it not be better to make no resistance?" said Grace. "Your firing upon them may so enrage the Indians that they will show us no quarter!"

"The wretches would show us none, in any case," replied Tom. "If I make a bold fight, they may think there are more than one opposed to them, and maybe cautious about coming in here, which might give us some chance to escape."

As he spoke, a shadow darkened the entrance of the cave, and Tom, the next moment, beheld a hideous-looking savage peering in.

The Indian evidently saw the wagon, but, ere he could withdraw, the boy fired.

The bullet struck the arm of the Apache, who quickly disappeared.

Ere Tom could reload, yells were heard, as the whole party rushed toward the cave.

"Let us run," said Grace. "There may be an opening at the other end of the cave."

"I don't think there is; but you had better go. You may find a hollow in which to hide yourself."

Thinking Tom intended to follow her, Grace sprang from the wagon, and away she went.

The next moment the forms of the Indians appeared at the opening.

"Get back, there!" cried Tom. "I've got a machine here in the wagon with which I can blow you to pieces."

At these words the party paused, and some of them shrank from the entrance.

"Think boy lie," cried one who was evidently a chief. "Indian not afraid. Indian come and take machine, if got one."

Headed by this fellow, the whole gang rushed in.

Tom took aim with his rifle and pulled trigger, but his weapon did not go off.

The savages advanced, but with some caution, for the words of the boy had not been without their effect.

Again Tom thought of his fire-works.

He raised the lid of the toy-box, and taking two sky rockets, pointed them, so that when set off they would strike his foes.

The latter saw him do this, and thinking he was about to work the machine of which he had spoken, they all fell back.

Seeing the effect he had produced, the lad again ordered the gang away, repeating the threat he had previously made.

To his great joy, the savages retreated hastily from the cavern.

Outside, however, he could hear their voices, and he knew that they were having a "talk."

If there was some way of exit at the other end of the cave, he might now escape.

Determined to see if there was, without any delay he ran forward, and soon, on turning an angle formed by a jutting rock, he discovered that there really was an opening, large enough for the passage of his horses and wagon.

Meanwhile, where was Grace?

Doubtless, she had run through the entrance at this end, and was in some good hiding-place.

He hurried back to the conveyance, and jumping in, drove toward the further opening. Ere he could pass through, he heard the yells of the Apaches, as they rushed into the cave.

A hideous picture they presented, with their painted faces, their half-naked forms and ugly head-dresses. Holding their shields of buffalo-hide in their left hands, and their lances poised in their right, they came on, but in a crouching position, for it was plain that they were still in dread of the machine with which the boy had threatened them.

As already stated, the sky-rockets were pointed toward the band, and Tom now sprung to the back part of the wagon, lighted a match and set them off.

The loud hissing of the spurting fire was followed by the unearthly, whizzing noise of the rockets, and had not the savages dropped, two of their number would have been killed. As it was, one of the rocket-sticks passed through the cheek of an Indian, who uttered a loud grunt of pain and dismay.

The whole band were about to fall back, when the chief gave a cry of defiance, and ordering them to follow him, rushed toward the wagon.

"White boy cannot frighten Dacola. He been see fire-stick before!"

As he spoke, he hurled his lance toward the lad, who, however, avoided it by dropping behind the roll of canvas.

"Then he whipped up his horses, but they had hardly started when the savages were in the vehicle.

"Ugh!" cried Dacola, as some of his men were about to strike the lad down with their tomahawks. "Better keep for roast!"

A moment later the boy lay in the wagon, bound hand and foot.

"I hope Grace will escape them, at any rate," thought Tom.

Just then he heard a shriek, and saw some of the Indians dragging the girl into the wagon.

The chief, with a few of his companions, now commenced to make an examination of the contents of the vehicle.

"Good!" he grunted, his eyes gleaming with satisfaction, as he turned over one article after the other. The toy-box was opened and an exclamation of admiration broke from the Indians as they proceeded to look at the things it contained.

Toys of all descriptions were there, together with a quantity of pin-wheels, fire-crackers, sky-rockets, etc.

"Look out!" cried Tom, who did not like to have his goods tumbled in this manner, "or the box will blow up and kill you all!"

"Lie!" cried Dacola. "If blow up and kill,

the white boy would have been glad of it, and so would not have told us!"

"Why, don't you see?" said Tom. "The things would not only kill *you*, but me and my sister, too! That's why I told you. When we get to your halting-place or camp, I will show you how all these wonderful articles are used."

The chief reluctantly closed the lid of the box, and the wagon now was rapidly driven on.

Soon after, the Indians were joined by the others, who had captured Ned and Yohon.

An account of the escape of the two boys was greeted with ejaculations of rage from the chief, and, raising his lance-pole, he vented his spite on his prisoners by striking them with it over the back.

But the brute had not struck Grace twice, when Tom, enraged beyond all bounds at seeing his sister thus treated, dealt him, with his feet, a furious kick in the stomach.

In an instant the chief's tomahawk flew from his belt, and he raised it over the boy's head, as if to brain him, then and there.

Grace uttered a piercing shriek, and contrived to throw herself, for she was not bound, between the weapon and her brother.

The next moment the chief's son—a youth of seventeen, caught his father's arm.

"Let not Wahla's father be too quick. He forgets that we lose our revenge. We were to roast the white boy. That is better than to kill him at once!"

"Good!" grunted the other savages and Dacola lowered his weapon.

A drive of about five miles brought the Apaches to their camp, which, at present, was in a valley near a deep thicket.

Men, women and children came out to see the prisoners and the wagon.

A tall Indian girl of fifteen, with a deerskin robe drooping to her knees, looked uneasily at Grace, on whom the gaze of Wahla—the chief's son, was fastened with an expression of admiration. This girl of the Apache tribe was exceedingly graceful, and, in spite of her dusky skin she was very pretty, with her long, shining black hair and her dark eyes.

Finally the two prisoners were conducted to a tent, near which the wagon and horses were also placed, with a guard about them, to prevent the women and children from climbing into it.

"When are the prisoners to be burned?" inquired Mona, the Indian maiden, of Wahla, who was her lover.

"Do not know. It is as Dacola shall say. The white girl should not be burned!"

"Why does Wahla say that?" inquired Mona, sharply. "Why not burn girl as well as boy?"

"The girl would make a good squaw for some one of our young men."

"Wahla does not say which."

The chief's son hung his head.

"How can he tell which?" was his answer. Mona moved away with a troubled look.

CHAPTER IX.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

NED and Yohon kept on their way. At last, the former paused on the summit of a steep cliff, having a ridge there which would serve as a

breastwork, in case the two men were obliged to fight.

"What's you goin's to do here?" said Yohon.

"To watch. I expect fore long to see the wagon in possession of them 'farnel Apaches."

"What goots der watchin' do—if we notas can safe de toys, and der—"

"Never mind the toys. It is of Tom and his sister I am thinking."

"And do you d'inks I haf forgot mein apple-blossom? No, I dies yet, tryin' to safes her. Mein gollies! dis works haf gif'en me an appetite. Wil you hafs some bologna?"

As he spoke, the Dutch boy pulled from his pocket the stale bologna, which has previously been mentioned.

"Poh!" cried Ned. "I hev not a weak stum-mick—that's a fact, but do you s'pose I could eat the sarsage, arter seein' it rammed down the gullet of that Apache boy?"

"Why not? Him Injun no bites it, and I been washes it mit de wasser."

"And wiped it, afterwards, on the seat of your pants. No, thank you, Yohon, keep your bologna to yourself!"

"Tunder and bliitzen! You's too partic'! Well, here goes mit dat bologna!"

And he commenced to eat it with great zest.

Meanwhile Ned kept a keen gaze upon the surrounding scenery, and, at last, he was rewarded with a sight of the wagon, which he saw for a few moments, moving along through a thicket, in the shadows of which it was soon lost to his view.

He had pointed it out to Yohon, who said he could see among the savages, the forms of Grace and her brother, Tom.

"De Lort be praise; dey haf not yet been scalp'd!" he cried.

"They will be burned at the stake, before night if we don't contrive to save 'em!"

"And how we goins to do dat? You tells me, and I go t'rough fire and wasser fur de sake of mein angel-fleisch."

"Thar is a settlement, five miles from hyar. The first thing to do, is to find out whar them varmints hev their camp, and then go to the settlement, to git some hunters to come and help us!"

"We losens no time, den," said Yohon. "We goes, now."

"Yes, we must start, at once."

They did so, and, keeping themselves hidden, they followed the Apaches, to see them finally reach their camp.

Then Ned led the way toward the settlement, but their progress was slow, for they were obliged to climb rocks and precipices which were difficult to ascend.

At length Yohon, who was not used to this sort of exertion, sunk down on his hams, saying he was unable to go further.

"Three miles more'll fetch it," said Ned. "Can't you pluck up strength enough fur that?"

"I has to rest mit myself, first," was the answer. "But don'ts you waits for me. Go on, and I cooms soon as I can."

"I reckin that's no help fur it, but you better get in this yere hollow," he added, pointing one out to the lad, "whar you'll be safer than whar you are, if Injuns come."

"All rights, den, I goes mit dis hollow," said Yohon, "and you keeps on."

Ned hurried off as soon as the Dutch boy was seated in the hollow.

The tired youth lay down, and ere he was aware of it, he dropped off into a deep sleep.

This, however, was not of long duration, for he was suddenly awakened by a loud bray, close to his retreat.

Opening his eyes wide, he beheld a grim, superannuated Mexican mule, which had evidently gone astray, looking at him through the opening of the hollow.

"Hullo! Ach! my, if dis ain't de good fortune mit myself. Here cooms jist wass I wants for de travel!"

He seized the mule's rein, when the animal endeavored to break away from him.

But Yohon led the creature to the foot of the bight, and then mounted it, urging it along in the direction which Ned had pointed out to him as the one by which the settlement was to be reached.

The mule being old, went slowly. Occasionally it would come to a dead halt, and all Yohon's attempts to induce it to keep on would, for some time, prove useless.

Having proceeded about a mile, the animal suddenly planted its fore-feet in the ground, and commenced to kick up its hind legs, scattering showers of mud all over its rider.

In fact it was now in a sort of swamp, where its legs, at every step, had sunk to the knees. The place where it stopped was close to a wide hole or ditch, full of soft mud.

"Gits along mit you!" cried Yohon, kicking the creature's sides with his heels. "Gits along and gits us a lift!"

But the mule would not move forward a step further. The more Yohon coaxed, the more vicious did it seem to become.

"Ach! you loafers; so you won't go?" cried the rider. "I gifs you somedings dat makes you go!"

And he raised his hand to grasp a switch from a low willow tree behind him.

As if aware of his intention, the mule whirled its body sideways, so that Yohon could not reach the tree. Then up went its hind legs, higher than before, but this time they did not come down again.

The heels of the animal had caught in the fissure of a rock, so that its position now was almost perpendicular, its fore-legs being buried to the knees in the mud.

Yohon pitched forward, shooting head downward over the ears of the mule into the marsh with a force which buried him below the shoulders.

He kicked his legs about in vain efforts to extricate himself, and, in a few seconds, he must have been strangled to death had not the vicious old mule in its desire to bite him, caught him by the broad seat of his pants and given its head a jerk. This jerk freed Yohon from the mire, and, as soon as he could regain his breath, he spoke to the mule as if it was a human being.

"Ach! danks, ole fuller! Hadn't you taken holts of mein back housen, I beens a dead coons sure."

The mule, which by this time had disengaged its heels from the rock, now drew off and dealt the speaker a kick, which sent him flying off four feet from where it stood. Then, with a loud bray, away it went, leaving the swamp, with Yohon sticking in it and trying to free himself, far in the rear.

"T'under! if I coulds git holt mit you!" roared Yohon, shaking his fists at the animal, "I gifs you somedings to remember! you means, tricky ting mit der clover hoof!"

At last he extricated himself from the swamp, and went limping along, trying to get around it.

It was not until late in the afternoon that he reached the settlement, to learn that Ned, with a party of three hunters, all that could be found there, at that time, had already started forward.

"I 'fraids dey does no good," muttered the lad; "'specially as I not can be mit dem. I's played out, and cans not keep on until de morning."

He found a sort of lodging-house, where he put up for the night.

Early the next morning he was startled by the clattering of hoots.

He looked out of the window and saw two hunters, wounded and bleeding ride into the settlement.

"Halloo!" shouted the proprietor of the house. "What's up, men?"

"We met some scouts of them 'farnal Apaches," was the answer, "and arter a desprit skirmmage to git away, we managed to save our beef, but I'm afeard it's all up with the plucky boy, Ned Transom."

"Lost his ha'r?"

"Not onlikely. The last we saw on him, he war behind a mound of earth, with the varmints flockin' up to him like wasps!"

Here Yohon flung up the window, and waved his arm to the hunters.

"Cowitz!" he cried, "cowitz! You leafs a comrades in der lurch! Ach! if I wass a man, I'd die before I leafs a boy, dat way!"

"Who, by the 'tarnal, is tha?!" inquired one of the hunters, for Yohon, having bound his head round and round with a woolen cloth, to cure him of a splitting headache, caused by his recent exertions, certainly presented a singular appearance.

The hunters were informed of the boy's name, and they rode off, laughing.

CHAPTER X.

THE TOY-BOX.

A FEW hours after Grace and her brother had been brought to the Apache camp, several savages came and led Tom from the tent.

The preparations for the torture had been made.

A stake had been driven into the ground, and around it dry wood had been piled.

"Now we soon roast white boy," said the chief, Dacola.

Tom coolly gazed at the stake, to which the Indians intended to fasten him.

"What is your hurry?" he inquired. "I could do some wonderful things with what's in the toy-box, if you would only wait. I can show you how to make handsome knife-handles, too,

and other useful articles, such as you would like to use. Better let me explain to you about the fireworks, at any rate, for I tell you, if I don't, your young men and boys will hurt themselves by using them in the wrong way."

"Dacola meant to bring the box, before boy die. He make boy show him how to use things in box."

In fact two savages had already lifted the box from the wagon, and, a moment later, it was laid at the feet of the captive, whose arms were then unbound.

The curiosity of the Indians was aroused, and many of them came, forming a circle about the lad.

Tom first lighted a pack of fire-crackers, and, as these went off, the youngsters of the party showed their delight by clapping their hands, and uttering loud shouts.

"Funny little guns—all strung together!" cried Dacola, "but not any bullet in them—nothing but sparks and fire!"

The boy next set off one of the sky-rockets, which also excited the admiration of the spectators, although several of them had seen these things before.

Tom now rummaged among the toys, and finally drew forth a number of small sections of wood.

"Now, then," he said, "I can make either a man or a woman of these pieces of wood."

He then rapidly fitted the pieces together, and a man, with a high, pointed hat on his head, was thus formed.

"Good! good!" was uttered by many of the Indians.

The youth then showed how, by fastening the pieces differently, a woman's image could be formed. He now took from the box a miniature wagon and horse, and putting a key in a hole at one side, he turned it round several times. Then, placing the images on the ground, he let go of them, and away they went, the wooden horse galloping along like a live animal.

The wonder and admiration of the Indians kept increasing as Tom continued to display his curious marvels, and when he set up two wooden soldiers opposite to each other, and, by means of a key, winding up certain machinery, caused them to draw their swords and commence a desperate combat, the delight of the band knew no bounds.

At length the boy pulled from the toy casket a box about the size of those in which cigars are kept.

"What going to do with that?" inquired Dacola. "It is only a box—nothing more."

Scarcely had the chief spoken when, touching a spring, the lad caused the lid of the little box to fly open, and up rose the image of an Indian, made of silk, life-size, striking out with a tomahawk, the latter of which was of rubber.

Ere Dacola could start back, the rubber tomahawk dealt him a stinging blow on the nose.

"Ugh!" he grunted, vainly striving to hide his surprise, while his companions broke into a loud laugh.

"Go back into your house, for your impudence!" said Tom, pressing upon the head of

the image, which he thus crushed down again, so that he could fasten the lid over it.

Many other curious toy exhibitions were given by the prisoner.

When he had finished the savages held a "talk," in a low voice.

Then Dacola stepped up to the lad and said: "Very good. What call these things been show?"

"Toys."

"Did the white boy make all the toys himself?"

"Yes, with some help."

"Never saw wooden man and wooden horse and woman walk before. How boy make them walk and jump?"

Tom looked very solemn, and answered slowly and impressively:

"That is a great secret—a wonderful secret!"

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, evidently much impressed. "The toy-wizard can make hi wooden men run and jump and fight, but can he make them talk?"

"To do that, I would have to have the *breath of the Great Spirit breathed into them!*"

Dacola and all his companions drew back, and looked at the speaker with an expression of awe.

Then the chief scowled.

"Dacola thinks the toy-wizard lies. He cannot get the Great Spirit to breathe into his toys. He makes big talk, but his talk will be *higher* than his deeds."

Tom perceived that he had gone too far.

"You do not understand. I meant that the Great Spirit would breathe through *me*, into the toys. I will ask him to help me, and he will give me the help of his breath to make a toy that can talk."

"Does the white boy say that he can make a wooden man that can talk?"

"Yes, but as I told you, it is a secret, and I will have to have help from the Great Spirit! It will take time to make wood talk."

"What will the wooden man say?"

"I don't know; he may say one thing, or he may say another."

There was a murmur among the savages, and again they conversed together, in low voices.

Tom had gone the right way to work to excite their curiosity.

"How long will it take the toy-wizard to make the speaking man of wood?"

"That I cannot tell. It will depend on how soon the Great Spirit breathes into my mind."

"Well, we shall see. The white boy shall be kept alive until he makes the talking wood!"

"First you must promise me something."

"What does the boy ask?"

"You must promise that you will not in any way, harm my sister. Unless you agree to that, I will not do what you want me to."

"The sister of the toy-wizard shall not be hurt. We will take good care of her."

Tom's eyes sparkled with joy.

"Another thing," he said. "You must not molest me—must not come near me until the talking wood is finished. I must be by myself, in some lonely place, away from the camp."

"It shall be so; but Dacola will have his men posted, so that the toy-wizard cannot escape."

"You can do as you like about that," replied Tom, indifferently. "When the work is finished, I will blow upon this," he added, pointing to a toy-bugle in the box.

"Good, but the box and the toys will be left with us," said Dacola.

"No—no, I must have them to help me in my work; by looking at the toys, I can make my plans."

"Then it shall be done."

"I must have the horses and the wagon near me, too!"

"The toy-wizard wants too much," said Dacola, looking at him suspiciously. "Why must he have the wagon and the horses?"

"I will tell you. All my tools and all my machinery are in the wagon. I will want the help of the horses to pull out some of my wires."

Dacola reflected a moment.

"It shall be as the toy-wizard wishes. We will not look at him work, but we will have to keep a good watch outside, to see that he does not escape."

"Very well; as you like."

"Now, then, the white boy can come and show Dacola where he wants us to leave him to do his work."

"First, let me speak to my sister."

The chief allowed him to go to the tent, when Tom informed Grace of the task which he was expected to perform.

"Oh, Tom, you can never do that!" she said, in a low voice.

"I don't think I can, either; but I mean to try. It will, at any rate, give us time, and meanwhile we may be rescued. I have made them promise not to harm you."

"What a good, brave boy you are, Tom! Be careful of yourself, and put off the finishing of your work as long as possible."

Just then Dacola looked into the tent, and told the boy to come out. He gave his sister an encouraging glance and left the tent. He accompanied the Indians to a valley, about a hundred yards from the camp. There was a deserted hut in the valley, which he said was just the place for a workshop.

The toy-box was carried to the hut, and the wagon and horses were also brought close to it. The vehicle was placed under a shelving rock, in a sort of rugged alcove, and the horses were secured near it.

Before night the Indians had brought a plenty of dry grass and piled it near the rocky stall, so that Tom, himself could feed the animals when necessary.

Looking from the hut just before sundown, the boy saw the savage guard stationed in a circle about the valley to prevent his escape.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE CAMP.

AFTER breakfast, Yohon left the settlement and struck out toward the mountains, near which the hunters had said they were attacked by a party of the Apaches.

He hoped that Ned had in some way effected his escape, that he would meet him, and that together they might contrive to rescue Grace

and her brother from the hands of the savages.

The Dutch lad, much refreshed by his night's rest, walked boldly forward, for, as already shown, he was not very cautious.

He reached the mountains, however, without seeing a single human being, and having partaken of some of the bologna, which he carried in his wallet, he looked for a spring at which he might quench his thirst.

He found one at last—a clear, limpid rivulet, flowing from a crevice in a rock.

He had finished drinking when he was startled by a dismal, croaking sound on his right.

Looking that way, he then beheld a spectacle which caused him to start back.

"Ach! Wass in t'under is dat?"

Upon the bough of a willow-tree was seated a grinning skeleton, attired in a garb similar to that which Ned had worn!

"Der Lorts helps dat poor feller! He meets his fate! He been scalpet; de flesh been eaten by de wolfs, and den he been dress up in his own cloats and hung on dat tree! Who puts him on dat tree? What he been puts dere for?"

"Owk! owk! owk!" said the ghastly apparition.

"Halloo! Tunder! Whoefer heers skeletons speak like dat?" muttered Yohon.

He started back so quickly that he tripped and fell over, with his heels flying upward.

He soon regained his feet, and looked again at the horrible object.

"Owk! owk! owk!" it said, a second time.

At the same moment a buzzard, which had been perched out of sight on a branch behind it, went soaring skyward, uttering the noise which had seemed to proceed from the skeleton.

"It's all plaints now!" cried Yohon. "Der noise coom from dat bird. Poor Neds! I feels sorry mit him, alldough he wass mein rivals."

He moved on, but evening came, without his seeing any human being.

All at once, just as he crept into a cave, where he intended to pass the night, he struck against some one, sprawled out, asleep, upon his face.

This person sprung up with a grunt, and, in the dim light, Yohon made out a half naked form, with a head-dress of feathers drooping over the face.

"Ach! you's a deaf nigger!" cried the boy, as he aimed a blow with the stock of his rifle at the head of the Indian.

In the gloom, however, the aim was not very straight, and the heavy stock descended on the posteriors of the person at whom it was directed.

It was a sounding thwack, but the Indian seized Yohon the next moment by the throat, and his knife flashed before the eyes of the Dutch boy.

The latter dodged to prepare to avoid the stroke, when he felt the hand of his opponent twisted in his hair, bending his head down so that his chin touched his breast.

"You bummers! you not gets mein scalp midout troubles!" cried the Dutch lad, as he raised his heel with the intention of kicking over his antagonist.

The latter, however, now caught the leg with his disengaged hand, and tumbled the Dutch boy over upon his back. At the same moment there was a burst of laughter, and Yohon, to his surprise, recognized the voice of Ned.

"You aren't good at Injun-fightin', that's a fact. You could hev been scalped from your head to your heels by this time."

"Holloa! Wass der meanin' of dis? I t'ought sure you wass an enemy!" cried the lad, as he rose.

"Yesterday I was attacked by a party of the Apaches," answered Ned, "but I saved myself by rollin' down a hill, and creeping under a rock. It war about dark, and while they war lookin' fur me I stole out. I knocked ag'in' a dead Injun, which one o' my pards had shot, and so I just whipped off his feathers and blanket and put 'em on. Jest then, 'fore I could pick up my own suit, which I had slipped off, I heard some o' the niggers close to me. I made tracks, 'thout havin' time to take my clothes with me, and passed three of the critters, who thought, in the dim light, I war one of taeir own gang. I hadn't gone fur when the moon came out, showing me that I was near a hollow, whar some travelers had bee: killed by the Injuns last year. Thar war several skeletons lyin' hyar, and I thought I'd jest stand one on 'em up to frighten the Apaches who war comin' on. I propped it up ag'in' a rock, and then away I went, takin' a roundabout track, which brought me hyar.

"I war mortil tired arter all I'd been through, but I tried to keep a watch. At last, toward mornin', I fell asleep, and have jest waked."

Yohon now informed Ned where he could find his clothes.

"Dem raskils must haf put your cloots on one of der skeletons, to makes people dirks you been kilts," he said, as he went on to explain.

"You kin bet they wouldn't hev done that," said Ned, "hadn't they heard a party of whites comin'."

"You dinks der's white people near us?"

"How near they are now I don't know; but a large party must hev passed this way last night or you kin be shore they wouldn't hev tuck themselves off."

"We will see if we canst not finds dat party, which will help us hunt for der shweet girl dat's been 'tolen from us by dem red peoples."

Ned had soon reached the place where his clothes were, and it did not take him long to put them on, after which he and Yohon started forward.

They saw the trail of the party which had passed in the night, but they soon lost it on firmer ground.

Their search was continued for four days without success. Toward the evening of the fifth, Ned suddenly paused on the euge of a thicket.

"T'ar's the Apache camp, jest beyond the woods," he said.

"T'under! I didn't know we war so close upon it. How cans we g t mein sweet fren from der clutches of der Injuns?"

"Hist! Thar's the the girl now," whispered Ned.

In fact, Grace was seen moving through the woods, by the side of a tall, handsome maiden—the Apache beauty, Mona.

"I hafs her now! I hafs mein apple blossom at last!" cried Yohon, and taking aim with his rifle, he fired at Mona, whom he doubtless supposed was keeping guard over the white girl.

The bullet went wide of the mark; but the report was, of course, heard by the savages on guard in the camp.

"Fool! You have sp'iled all," said Ned. "We mou't hev had the gal, and got her off, but fur your firin'."

Heedless of his companion's words, Yohon sprung forward toward Grace; but both she and the other now had fled in the direction of the camp, from which her people were rushing, armed with shields and lances, as they thought enemies were about to make an attack upon them.

The Dutch lad crouched down behind a heap of dry brushwood, and beheld the dim forms of the warriors, as they went speeding past without seeing him in the gloom.

"Goot!" he muttered. "Ned calls me a fools, but I dinks I been shows mooch of der wisdoms mit strateger. Dem fellers goes away from der camp, den I comes to der camp, and rescues mein shweet girl from der place, mit dem coons all gone away!"

The savages having passed, he arose and moved swiftly toward the camp, but he had not approached within ten yards of it, when he beheld a large party of the Apaches, drawn up near it, in warlike array. The boy could see the eyes of the braves, gleaming from under their ugly head dresses, and could distinguish the outlines of their naked forms, their shields and their lances.

"No, danks you!" thought Yohon. "I not goes a peg nearer!"

He shrunk back, and moved cautiously along toward the right. For about an hour he kept dodging about, thinking he heard footsteps near him. All at once, through the darkness, he fancied he could make out the shape of a wagon with a canvas top.

"T'under! if dat's not der wagon of Tom Derricks, den my names ain't Yohon!" he muttered.

Between him and the vehicle, however, he beheld the dim form of a savage, who was slowly pacing to and fro.

"If I cans git mit dat wagon, I may hides myself dere, and gits a chance for safe mein girl!" thought the boy.

Watching from behind a tree until the back of the dusky sentinel was toward him, he suddenly made for the vehicle, which he reached and entered, ere the Indian had turned round to retrace his "beat."

Chuckling to himself, he crept down under some rolls of canvas, and there he lay, hoping he would eventually find a chance to rescue Grace Derrick.

CHAPTER XII. THE IMAGE.

In the hut which the Indian had given up to Tom for a shop, the boy at once went to work.

By the morning of the fifth day after his capture, he had carved out the shape of a man from a log, and had hollowed it from head to foot. He had meanwhile pondered much as to what sort of machinery would be necessary for procuring a sound like that of some human being uttering real words. Finally he concluded that he required a little silver to give the metallic noise peculiar to a man's voice.

Accordingly, on the afternoon of the fifth day, he signaled one of the guards, and told him he wanted to speak to the chief.

The latter soon arrived, and Tom met him outside of the hut.

"What does the toy-wizard want? Has he finished the talking wood?"

"No. I must have some silver to go on with my work, but I have none in the wagon."

"Ugh!" grunted the chief. "Dacola knows where there is plenty, but a strong guard must go with the boy."

"It is well. I am ready. Is the place far from here?"

"An arrow shot six times would reach it. The hills are bright with silver. The white boy can get plenty there. How long will it then take him to make the wooden man that can talk?"

"I cannot tell, but it will not take very long."

As the lad spoke, he did not see the moon-like face of Yohon at one of the crevices in the canvas of the wagon, where he had heard every word that was said.

"Silver! silver!" thought the Dutch lad, "and man dat est to talk mades of wood! Ach! I dinks I's in mit some of dat silver!"

"Has the white boy made the wooden man, yet?" inquired Dacola—"has he made all except the talk?"

"Gollies!" cried Tom, "you must not get too impatient, but I don't mind telling you I have made the man!"

"Ugh! Dacola would like to see."

"Come, now," said the boy, "that won't do. The Great Spirit will not help me if you look at my work before it is done!"

"Well, then, won't look, but if toy-wizard don't finish soon, Dacola will begin to think he can not do what he said."

"Don't trouble yourself about that. Now, then, take me to the place where I can get the silver; but mind, while I am gone, not a soul must enter the hut. If any of you do, good-by to the talking man of wood!"

"Dacola will tell his braves not to go there."

A few minutes later, guarded by half a dozen armed savages, Tom was conducted from the camp.

A walk of about two miles brought the party to a long ridge of rock, running for many hundreds of yards along the edge of a broad hill.

"Look!" said Dacola, who was with the band. "What does the white boy see?"

"I see nothing but some ugly-looking walls of dark rock ahead of us, not so high as the hill we are on."

"Good! that is all the toy-wizard sees, now, but Dacola will soon show him something else."

The lad was led over the ridge down into a valley below, from one end of which rose the first of the walls of rock. The Indians marched

straight to the base of this wall, when, shoving aside a broad slab of rock there, Dacola disclosed an opening large enough for several persons to pass through.

"Come!" he said to the lad—"go on."

Tom did so, accompanied by the chief and four of the other savages.

"Now let the toy-wizard look up!" cried Dacola.

The boy raised his eyes, and a cry of admiration escaped him. From its summit, the wall on this side was ribbed and veined with the precious metal, extending to the very bottom of the ravine or gulch where the youth was standing.

"Ugh! is there silver enough for the talking wood?" inquired Dacola.

"Yes, and some to spare!" answered Tom, as he gazed wistfully at the shining wall.

"By gollies!" was his mental exclamation, "if I could only get at this treasure, I would no longer have to work at making toys, and would soon be a rich man!"

With a chisel and hammer he had brought with him, the lad cut out some of the silver from the rock.

He took as much as he could carry, which was a little more than he wanted to use upon the wooden man.

"After I make the talking wood," he said to Dacola, as the party were returning, "I hope the chief will set me free, and let me work that silver mine."

"It shall be so," answered Dacola, but Tom could see him exchange a grim, significant look with his companions, which convinced him that the rascal would not keep his word.

Finally the boy returned to the hut, which he reached soon after dark.

He closed and barred the door of the hut, lighted a candle, and was getting ready for work, and it struck him that his wooden man did not occupy the position in which he had left it.

He was sure that, before going with the party, he had placed the image in a corner, whereas it now stood against the side of the dwelling opposite to the door!

"Confound those niggers!" muttered the lad. "They promised they would not touch my work—would not come here, at all, and here they have been handling and moving the wooden man!"

"YAW-HOOCH!"

Tom started back in amazement, for the exclamation had come directly from the mouth of the image!

"HAW! YOU SKIMPLEHAUS! Haw! HAW! OH, YOU RASKALS!" cried the wooden man, again.

What could it mean? It seemed as if the image had concluded to *finish itself*, instead of waiting for Tom to do so.

The boy was much startled, until, suddenly the statue fell.

Then it uttered a groan, followed by an angry exclamation.

"Ach! Confounds dat wooten fellers! he makes me almost broken der knee-pans! Takes me out! frient Tom, for I's most shmudder, midouten der atmospheres!"

"Yohon!" cried Tom, still more surprised. He sprung to the prostrate image, and separated the parts which were made to fit to each other, but which could not be taken off by a person inside.

Yohon thus "shelled," as it were, was revealed in all his glory.

He rose and grasped Tom's hand.

"Danks der Lort! We cooms togedder, at last!" he cried.

"How came you here? What does it mean?" Yohon soon explained.

"I lies mit de wagon," he continued, "for more dan one whole days, and if I not finds somed'ings to eat, dere, I d'inks I shtarvens mit der def!"

"But how did you contrive to slip into the hut without being seen?"

"I watchit mein chance. I haf a chance at dusk. And now tells me all about der silver!" he added, and his eyes seemed to literally bulge from his head as he gazed at the precious material which Tom had brought.

"It is a mine! it would make our fortune, if we could get possession of it," said Tom. "I saw it! saw the silver glittering on the rocky wall from top to bottom, and the hight of the wall was fully seventy-five feet."

"Oh! der Lorts help me! I faints! I swoons!" gasped Yohon—"for Got's sake! lets us goings mit dat silver!"

"We cannot escape from the camp. The Indians have a guard. Besides, you forget that we would have to leave my sister."

"No, I nefer forgets her! nefer!" answered Yohon. "I means for us to takens her alongs, too!"

"Hark!" cried Tom, suddenly. "Some one is coming!"

In fact hasty footsteps were heard, and, a moment later, peering through a crevice of the hut, the young toy-maker saw Dacola, with some other Indians, running toward the habitation.

Hastily throwing a piece of canvas over the image after he had induced Yohon to hide himself therein, the boy opened the door.

"Where is the white girl—is she here?" inquired Dacola, as he approached.

"Here? no. What do you mean?" said Tom. "Dacola will go into the hut, and look," cried the chief. "The toy-wizard's sister has gone. We cannot find her. We think she must have hidden herself in the hut, or in the wagon."

"No, she is not here!" answered the boy. "You can come and look, if you wish."

Dacola entered the hut, while some of his companions hunted in the wagon.

The chief glanced keenly around him, until, at length, his gaze fell upon the canvas-covered image.

"What is that? The girl may be under that."

"No, that is the wooden man."

"If look, will it binder toy-wizard from going on with work?"

"No; not now, for I am almost ready to make it speak!"

As he spoke, the lad took off the canvas, revealing the carved statue, propped upright against the side of the hut.

The chief uttered a cry of admiration.

"Good!" he grunted.

He advanced close to the image, and tapped it with his fingers.

"Glad when toy-wizard make him speak! Go, now, and look for white girl."

And, ere Tom could say another word, away he went.

The boy waited until he heard the receding footsteps of the savages; then he freed Yohon from his situation.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SURPRISE.

AFTER Ned saw Yohon plunge into the woods, and heard the savages approaching, on the night when the Dutch boy fired at the Indian girl, Mona, he ran along behind the shrubbery, and finally crouched in some bushes, far to the left.

The Indians moved hither and thither, looking for the person who had discharged the piece, but their search was as shown, unsuccessful.

As soon as the parties hovering about his place of concealment, had returned to their camp, Ned emerged from the bushes, and made his way to a valley, about a mile distant.

In this valley there was a cave, partly hidden by shrubbery, which grew about the entrance.

"Hyar's whar I've passed many an hour, when on a huntin' tramp," muttered the youth, "and it's safe from Injuns, as it war one of the burial places of the Navajoes, in old times, and is sacred. The worst varmint of all the reds would not come hyar, unless he war sartint an enemy war hid in the place. I'll jest make my quarters in the cave, until I git a chance to rescue Grace from the Apaches. Thar's one comfort, which is that they hevn't harmed the gal, and I reckin I know the reason, which is that some one of the young braves means to make her his squaw. The Lord save the poor child from such a fate."

On the next night Ned resolved to approach the camp.

He started and finally arrived on the edge of the thicket, beyond which were the Apache tents. Nearer and nearer to the camp, as cautiously as a serpent, he crept, until he was startled by a hand upon his shoulder. Looking up, he then beheld Mona, the Indian girl, her eyes flashing like stars in the dim light.

"Mona knows what the white-hunter wants," she said, in a low voice. "He is after the girl prisoner, and if so, she will help him."

"Why is the Apache maiden so willing to help a foe?" inquired Ned, suspiciously, as he rose to his feet.

"Dark was the day, the white girl came here," answered Mona, bitterly.

"Hah! maiden, I think I kin see through this. You are jealous of her! The eyes of a lover hev rested too long on her pooty face to suit you."

"The hunter is right," the girl frankly answered. "That is why Mora is willing that you should take her away from here."

"You'll bring her to me!" said Ned, joyfully.

"It shall be done. The further the white hunter carries her from the Apache camp, the better will Mona like it."

"Well, then, I'll wait hyar, ef you'll go fur her," said Ned.

"Good," answered Mona. "I go, let the hunter stay here."

She disappeared in the gloom, and, while awaiting her return, the youth stood with cocked rifle, prepared for treachery.

The Indian maiden soon came back, accompanied by Grace.

"On, Ned, is it you?" she cried joyfully.

"Yes, hyar I am, and to git you away from me, the varmints will hev to kill me fu'st."

"How can I thank you for what you have done for me?" said Grace to Mona.

The Indian girl frowned. "Mona needs no thanks," she said bitterly, and, without another word, she went back to the camp.

Ned took the arm of Grace, and hurried with her from the thicket.

"Thar's a settlement 'bout twenty mile from hyar," said the youth, "and thar I'll take you."

"Ah, would that Tom was with me! I could not induce Mona to do anything to help me rescue him."

"You know, then, that he's alive?" cried the hunter.

"Yes; the chief has kept him alive to make him some kind of toy, I believe."

"That's like an Injun. Ef Tom takes advantage of that, he mou't contrive to escape. I'll try and git a party to go with me from the settlement to help rescue him."

In a few hours the two were some miles from the Apache camp.

The moon, which hitherto had been hidden by clouds, now shone forth, and Ned suddenly drew Grace behind a rocky ridge, near which the two stood.

"Thar's a party of Injuns comin'," he said.

"Indians?"

"Yes, mounted on ther horses. By ther long lances, I think the coons are Navajoes!"

"Navajoes! Oh, dear! they are, if anything, worse than Apaches."

"About the same."

"Then we are lost!"

"No, fur they didn't see us, as we war in the shadde'r of the rock."

"They are coming this way?"

"Yes, ef I aren't mistook, they're going to attack the Apaches."

"Then Tom will be sure to be killed."

"Let's hope fur the best."

He reflected, and then said:

"I think it's better fur me to foller in the trail of 'them chaps, and during the scrimmage I mou't do somethin' fur Tom!"

"You will imperil your own life."

"That's nothin'. I've done that often. No use of your going with me," he added. "I'll leave you in a good place. Thar's a hut not fur from hyar whar you'll be safe."

"A hut."

"Yes; it has a concealed cellar to it, whar my pards and I hev many a time hidden our skins."

Waiting until the Indians had passed the elevation upon which he and the girl stood, he descended the height, helping her along, as the rocks were difficult to descend. More than once

she glanced toward the array of grim warriors, who, mounted on good horses, were speeding over the open country. They were strong-looking fellows, with a piece of skin about each waist, their plumes waving in the wind, and their long lances glittering as they rode.

"The varmints are making good speed, but they'll go slower soon," said Ned. "They can't see us ef they look this way, fur we're still in the shadde'r."

Descending into a valley with his companion, he showed her a rude hut, not more than six feet high and five broad, half hidden by bushes and vines.

Leading her into it, he raised a trap-door, concealed with sods, and conducted her down a flight of steps into an apartment about ten feet in area, containing a rude seat and a sort of table, made of logs.

"Thar, I hope you'll be comfortable till I come back," he said. "Ef I shouldn't come back, you'll know that, in a week from now, some of my friends will be hyar. Meanwhile, thar's provisions to last you a fortnight," he added, depositing his well-stocked wallet on the table.

"But you *will* come back?" said Grace, a tear trembling on her long, downcast lashes.

"I'll move the 'arth itself to git back, you kin be shore; but anyway, my pards will come. They do so every year, 'bout the time of a week from now. Good-by, miss!"

She held out her hand, and Ned could feel it tremble in his grasp.

The next moment he was gone, and she could hear him close the trap above her.

The young hunter sped along on the trail of the Navajoes, keeping himself hidden by bushes and ridges of earth.

The band were nearly out of sight, and finally they were concealed from his gaze by a mist-bank, into which they had ridden.

"Thar'll be music, pootoo soon," muttered the youth, as he kept on.

Half an hour later a yell, with which was blended the report of rifles, indicated that the strife had commenced.

Ned had ensconced himself in a hollow in a thicket, and he now crept rapidly forward to see the dim forms of the Apaches, as they fled before the party, which had almost surprised them and, therefore, had greatly the advantage.

Now and then the quick ear of the hunter caught the dull thud of a tomahawk, as it was buried in the brain of some unfortunate whose scalp was to be taken.

The youth, meanwhile, looked in vain for Tom's wagon, which he knew the Apaches had possession of.

By dodging about here and there he got close to the camp, but neither there nor among the fugitives could he see the boy he was looking for.

Finally, after the Navajoes had left the camp behind them to continue the pursuit, he saw a female figure emerge from the trunk of a large, hollow tree, and thought he could recognize Mona.

He sprung to her side, and as she started back he said:

"Fear nothing; it is the white hunter."

"The hunter is brave to come here where he has two enemies—both the Navajoes and the Apaches."

"I came, gal, thinking I mout' help my friend, Tom Derrick. Whar is he? I hope you've bid him somewhar."

"No; Mona knows not where he is. He and the wagon and horses disappeared before the Navajoes attacked us. My people were looking in vain for them, when we were attacked. Think Navajoes must have crept up, after kill, ing our guards, and have stolen horses, wagon-boy, and all."

"You'd hev seen 'em, in that case. I kin sw'ar the wagin war onvisible 'fore the attack!"

"Navajoes may have taken and hidden somewhere. There is ravine not far from here."

"I know that place well. I passed through it 'fore I came to the thicket, but the wagin war not thar."

"Then don't know where it is. It is very strange."

"Right, gal, it sartintly are. Couldn't Tom hev hitched the hosses to the wagin and druv off, 'thout your guards knowing it?"

"No. The Apache braves were posted in a circle around the places it would have had to pass."

"Then the hull thing beats me. The wagin couldn't hev sunk in the ground, with Tom, hosses and all."

"Don't know," said Mona solemnly. "The toy-wizard could do wonderful things. Might he not have known how to vanish, in that way?"

"No, gal, no; your common sense ought to teach you better'n that. You're as superstitious as a Navajo."

"Mona's mother was of the tribe of the Navajoes," said the girl. "That is why, in some things, she thinks as they do. Now, then, Mona will go away."

With these words, she darted off, soon disappearing from Ned's gaze in the gloom of the thicket.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIEND, BIG EYE.

THREE days after the attack of the Navajoes, Ned made his appearance before Grace.

She gave a cry of joy, but her countenance fell when she saw nothing of her brother.

"Tom is not with you?" she said.

"No, I hevn't been able to find him. I came upon the tracks of his wagin, which seem to go past this place, 'bout a mile off, and I've been tryin' to foller 'em up, but they've been so tramped out of sight by the Navajoes' hosses further on, that I lost the trail. Ef I keep on, I may see something of 'em."

"May not I go with you?"

"As it's on the way to the settlement, you mout' go. I hev a hoss fur you."

"A horse?"

"Yes, I saw one scampering off, probably that of a killed Apache, and as exchange is no robbery, I thought I mout' as well take possession, seein' as the varmints stole one of mine some months ago. This one is not so good as

mine war. His face has been hurt some way, and he has a squar' piece of blanket hung over it, with holes fur his eyes."

He conducted Grace to the foot of the bight, and, having mounted the horse, Ned took the bridle and hurried forward. He soon reached the place where he had struck the trail of the wagon and kept on.

At length the two came in sight of a broad hill, with a ridge extending along the summit of it.

Then Ned suddenly led horse and rider into a hollow, with a sort of earth-mound on one side of the upper edge.

"Lie close, gal! Lower yer head! Thar's Injuns in the shrubbery on the right of that hill!"

Scarcely had he spoken, when, with a wild whoop, about a dozen Navajoes broke from the shrubbery, and, flourishing their lances, darted toward the hollow.

Ned at once rested his rifle on the mound, took good aim, and fired.

A grunt was heard, and one of the savages reeling, fell upon his side.

The youth rapidly reloaded, but, ere he could fire, a long lance came whizzing toward the mound and glanced over the shoulder of the hunter, sticking in the ground.

"Here they come!" cried Grace.

Bang! went the rifle again, and a second Indian measured his length on the earth.

"Run, gal! and try to hide yourself in the hut. I'll keep these varmints at bay long as I kin!"

But a lance at that moment passed through the sleeve of the girl's dress, and, sticking in the side of the hollow thus held her fast.

Three more bounds brought the savages within a few feet of the hollow, and the points of half a dozen lances gleamed before the eyes of Ned and Grace, when a noise so strange, so loud and so terrible that all who heard it stood as if paralyzed, came from the direction of the hill! The sound was a most unearthly one, almost indescribable, resembling the blast of a horn, the neighing of a horse, and the scream of a hyena, all in one.

Then the Indians turned, to behold a spectacle so horrible that some of them, in their superstitious terror, actually threw themselves upon the ground!

What they saw was a figure—the arms, legs, and hands of which were shaped like those of a human being, but were covered with black stripes. The breast, also black, was very broad, and perfectly square, like a box, while the head, though smaller, was of the same shape, and without a neck. The mouth, half the width of the head, showed enormous fangs; the eyes, as large as apples, shot forth lightning glances; the ears, of a red color, were of the size of horse-shoes, while the nose was flat, with huge black nostrils, from which projected tufts of white hair!

The strange being, standing motionless for a few seconds, while continuing to utter its horrid cries, suddenly came striding toward the party.

On perceiving this, the savages sprung up, and away they went, darting toward the shrubbery on the left of the hill. A few minutes

later, they had mounted their horses, and were flying along with the speed of the wind.

Grace's horse having seen the wonderful apparition, took fright, and as Ned seized the reins, it bounded off, heedless of his attempts to stop it. The active youth, as the animal sprung from the hollow, placed his feet on the bank, and swung himself astride of the beast, for he could see that the girl, dismayed by the horrid vision, was powerless to keep her place.

Ned, holding the reins with one hand, put an arm about her waist to support her, while he vainly endeavored to check the speed of the horse, which was flying after the Navajoes!

"For God's sake! Grace, don't git 'frighted! It war a fearful sight, I'll allow, and what it is, or what it com'd from, is more than I kin tell. I never saw sech a critter before!"

"Has it gone? tell me has it gone?" she gasped, lifting her head from the hunter's breast.

Ned cast a glance behind him, to perceive that the strange object had vanished.

"Yes, cheer up! it's gone now, thanks to gracious! Ef I'd seen it ag'in, I kin not say but what I, too, mout hev got almost as skeery as yourself."

"What could it have been? Oh, dear! how dreadful!"

"Thar's many strange things I've seen happen in this yere world; but I'll own that this beats me!"

He now made every effort to stop the horse, which, he perceived, was fast nearing the Navajoes, who had slightly slackened their speed, but the animal paid no heed to him. On it went, and at last, when some miles from the hill, the hunter saw the Indians turn and string themselves along to catch the frightened courser.

"We will perish if we fall into their hands!" cried the girl.

"I'll do the best I kin. I hev an idee, which may save us!"

Soon the horse was so close to the Indians, that, by making a dash toward it on all sides, they succeeded in stopping it.

They pulled Ned and the girl from the beast, and had raised their tomahawks above the prisoners, when the young hunter said:

"Bewar'! that critter yer saw come from un'-arthly regions a-purpose to save the gal and me! Ef you don't want to see it come ag'in, and 'tar yer souls out o' your bodies, you'd better let up on us. Shore as you're born, we're purtected by that fiend, and woe to them that harms a ha'r of our heads."

These words seemed to produce a great effect upon the Navajoes, who have always been very superstitious.

"How the white hunter make 'Big Eye' come?" inquired one, who was evidently a chief.

"I prayed fur him to come."

"Can make Big Eye come any time want to?"

"Yes, I kin."

The Indians gazed at the speaker with a look of awe.

There was a murmur among them, and finally the chief said:

"We will take to camp of Navajoes, and see medicine-man. Hear what medicine-man say."

The prisoners were taken to the Indians'

camp, which was about four miles from this place.

The "medicine"—an old, gray-headed fellow, on hearing about the strange vision, reflected a moment, and then said that he had a dream, in which it had been revealed to him that the terrible fiend—"Big Eye"—would appear to haunt the Navajoes, and bring misfortune upon them. In his opinion, however, Big Eye was not invulnerable, and could be shot. The brave who could destroy him would be forever fortunate thereafter, and would be made a great chief when he died and went to the happy hunting-ground. It would be necessary, the "medicine" continued, for his people to have prisoners accompany them when they went to shoot the fiend.

A council was held, and ten of the most courageous of the Indians were selected for the task of destroying the demon.

They set out the next morning, taking Grace and Ned with them.

CHAPTER XV.

CARRIED OFF.

It was a clear, bright morning when the party set out, and the long lances of the Indians gleamed brightly in the sun as they rode slowly forward at a pace which would enable the captives, whom they surrounded, to keep up with them.

They soon arrived close to the hill, which they had scarcely done, when that terrible cry they had heard on the day before, saluted their ears, and over the ridge, on top of the elevation, again appeared the horrible form of Big Eye.

The savages fairly trembled with superstitious fear as they saw the strange, uncouth monster approaching them, but three of them mustered sufficient courage to discharge their rifles at him. They heard the thud of the bullets, as they struck the hideous form, but the creature came on, *not in the least harmed by the shots*, again uttering his fearful cry, although much louder than before!

"Marciful gracious!" gasped Ned. "That critter doesn't belong to this mortil 'arth. Come, Irjuns, you better streak it, or the *thing*, whatever it are, will burn you up with his great eyes!"

The savages needed no persuasion to leave, after having witnessed the invulnerability of the being at which they had fired.

In fact, every horse of the party had also taken fright, and away they went, speeding off like the wind. One of the band, who had tied a rope about the form of Ned, and had been holding on to it with one hand, retained his grasp, when, to prevent himself from being dragged along the ground after the steed, the hunter seized the bridle and clung to it.

Finally the savage, to manage his horse, was obliged to let go of the rope attached to the captive, who then fell to the earth, striking it so violently that he was stunned.

Meanwhile another Indian, who, by a second rope, held Grace, had endeavored to pull the girl upon his courser, as the latter started forward. The rearing of the steed and the struggles of the fair captive soon obliged him to re-

lease her, and she fell, alighting first upon her feet and then dropping on a pile of branches, which saved her from injury.

As she rose, she caught a glimpse through the shrubbery, of the Indians, still in mad career over the country beyond.

She looked around her for Ned, but she did not see him. On the hill, however, she beheld the demon, whose large, horrible eyes shot their lightning gleams upon her! The monster was approaching her, and, with a low cry of terror, she ran forward, toward some masses of rocks, on her left.

The hideous noise made by the strange creature, far more terrible than that either of a lion or a hyena, fell upon her ears as she fled, and her limbs nearly gave way under her.

Finally, she reached the rocks, and unable to go further, she sunk down in a small cavern.

To her horror and dismay, she soon heard the peculiar rattling noise made by the feet of the demon, and a moment later, she beheld him at the mouth of the cavern, his enormous eyes, appearing to roll like balls of fire in his great, square head, and his breath coming forth like that of a bellows from his monstrous mouth!

"God help me!" shrieked the girl. "Help! help! help!"

Then she fell back in a swoon, to be picked up by the intruder, who made off with her toward the hill.

Ned had, by this time, recovered. He lay about fifty feet from the cavern, among the bushes which extended, for some distance, on this side of the hill.

His first thought being of Grace, he staggered to his feet and looked around him. At first, owing to the shrubbery in front of him, he did not see the fiend who was bearing off the girl, but when he reached the hill, he and his fair burden were fully revealed to the gaze of the youth.

Ned was courageous, but he now hesitated about pursuing the unnatural being, who had inspired him with a feeling of dread, which he was unable to overcome.

"The gal must be saved!" he muttered, at last. "Yes, I'll save her, ef I kin, or I'll die in trying it!"

One of the savages, in his flight had dropped his rifle, which was loaded. The hunter perceived that this was his own piece, which had been taken from him on the day before, and he was glad enough to regain possession of it.

"Now, then!" he continued. "Now fur that—that—good Lord! what am I to call the critter?"

He paused, after taking a few steps forward, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

Again he looked toward the demon, and perceived that he was fast nearing the ridge of the hill.

"Come, now, I'm mortil 'shamed o' myself for feelin' so skeery!" he muttered. "I'll try to save the gal, no matter what happens, and now I'm going fur that devil, yonder!"

Mustering all his courage, he started off in pursuit, and soon perceived that he was rapidly gaining on the abductor, whose movements were strangely awkward. The fiend became aware that he was being followed, and, turning, he

again uttered one of his terrible cries, which seemed to go through Ned's ears like a knife.

The stout-hearted young hunter, however, although his blood fairly seemed to grow cold in his viens, kept steadily on.

"Let her go! let the gal go, you varmint, whatever you are!" he shouted.

The demon still kept on, and finally gained the ridge of the hill.

By this time Ned was within a few paces of him, and now, bringing his rifle to his shoulder, he pointed it toward him.

"We'll see ef a bullet kin not do something at close quarters," he cried. "Put down the gal, or I fire!"

The fiend, with another cry, stopped, turned round, deposited the senseless girl on the ground at his feet, and then stood erect, his great, green orbs flashing full upon his opponent.

"Away you go, and leave the gal," shouted Ned, shuddering in spite of himself. "Quick! you horrid varmint! quick!"

Big Eye, taking a step forward, uttered a sort of brazen shriek, and shook his head negatively, at the same time raising one hand, which the hunter could perceive looked as if it was sheathed in iron.

"Hyar goes, then!" cried Ned, "plumb center, ef I die for it!"

The sharp crack of the rifle was heard, but although it had been aimed straight at the head of the terrible being, the latter stood in the same attitude as before.

"Halloo! gracious!" gasped the hunter too much dismayed to reload his piece. "What kin it mean? Who are you? Whar did you come from, and fur what?"

As if in answer to the last question, the demon, upon whom Ned's bullet had taken no effect, whatever, pointed toward the sky with his iron finger, and toward the prostrate girl, with his disengaged hand!

Then springing forward, he struck the rifle so powerful a blow that the stock was driven against Ned's temple with a force, which caused him to drop senseless to the ground.

CHAPTER XVI. THE SEARCH.

WHEN the young hunter recovered, he was some time in recalling past events, to mind.

Gradually, however, memory brought back to his mental vision, the horrible face and form of the fiend, whom the Indians had called Big Eye.

Then he thought of Grace, and a groan escaped him.

"She is gone! I failed to save her!" he muttered.

He raised himself on his elbow, and, to his surprise, perceived that he was now in a sort of cave, with a girl kneeling by his side.

He recognized Mona—the Indian maiden, who held in her hand a cloth saturated with cool water, with which she had been bathing his head.

"How did I come hyar?" he inquired.

"Mona go look for Wahla, but she not could find him since Navajo's attack. While she look, she come to hill, and there she find white hunter, lying senseless. She bring him to, and, just

then, Apaches come on horses. They been looking for Wahla too, but not could find. Going to kill white hunter, but Mona tell them not to, and they say they wait till he come to, so as to burn and torture!"

"So the varmints are goin' to kill me? Whar are they?"

"Outside, but Mona try to save boy, for he help her git the white girl away."

"How kin you save me?"

"Wait until night. The hunter must lie down again, close his eyes, and make believe he not yet come to his senses."

"You say your Apaches was on the hill. Did they see there, anything of a horrible being with great green eyes and a square head?"

"They see nothing," answered Mona, and she looked at Ned with an expression which showed that she thought his mind wandered. "Hark!" she added, "Injun coming in, now. Lie down, and close eyes!"

Ned did as she requested, and, a moment later, an Apache entered the cave to ascertain if the youth had yet recovered.

On perceiving that he still lay apparently senseless, the Indian went out.

The shades of night soon after darkened the cave.

"Come," whispered Mona. "Now the white hunter can go!"

Ned sprang to his feet.

"Follow," said the girl.

She led the way along a path concealed by tall clumps of shrubbery.

"Injuns only few yards off. See!" and as she spoke, she pointed to half a dozen dusky forms, gathered about a fire in a sort of glen.

The moon had not yet risen, but so familiar was the hunter with this part of the country, that, as soon as Mona had conducted him beyond the shrubbery, among some masses of rock, he knew what direction to take to reach the valley in which was the hut with the secret cellar.

Unknown to the girl, some of the Indians were on guard among the rocks to prevent another surprise from their enemies—the Navajoes, and Ned after parting from Mona, had not proceeded far, when he was seized, thrown down and his wrists fastened with thongs.

"Ugh!" ejaculated one of his captors, "the white hunter not get off so easy from Apaches. They have many eyes, and like the wildcat, they can see in the dark."

"Ef I'd hev had a rifle, you wouldn't have captoored me so easy, you varmints," said the boy.

The savages called to their comrades about the fire, and the captive was soon led up to the blazing fagots.

"What's become of toy-wizard, wagon and horses?" inquired the chief, Dacola.

"How should I know? Ef I did, you kin bet I wouldn't tell you."

"Well, all same, going to roast. Roast you instead of other boy we cannot find."

A stake was placed in the ground, Ned was tied to it, and sticks having been piled around him, were soon ready for lighting.

Dacola, himself, was about to apply the torch,

when, all at once, the dreadful unearthly cry of Big Eve was heard not twenty paces off.

The effect of this sudden strange noise upon the Indians was such, that the chief dropped his torch, and the whole band started back with an exclamation of terror.

At the same moment, with the light from the fire falling full upon his hideous face and form, the demon appeared from a clump of shrubbery and stood glaring with his huge green eyes upon the party!

He gave utterance, as he did so, to a cry louder and more dreadful than the preceding one, at the same time striking his iron-bound fingers together with a clash.

The savages, with a wild yell of superstitious fear, did not pause to cast a second glance at the horrible being before them, but away they went, running as if for their lives, with the apparition clattering after them.

A few minutes later, both the fiend and the Indians disappeared from the captive's sight in the gloom.

He then struggled, but in vain to free himself from the thongs which held him to the stake.

"By the 'tarnal!' he muttered. "I'm afraid the varmints will be back and roast me, arter all, 'fore I kin git cl'ar!"

All at once, his gaze fell upon the torch, which was still burning and which lay on the pile of fagots.

By stretching himself to the utmost, and by thus loosening his thongs, Ned was enabled to reach the torch, his hands having been freed after he was tied to the stake.

It was now easy for him to burn his cords asunder, which he had scarcely done, when he again beheld the dreadful demon, who approached the fire, the light flashing with dazzling brilliancy, upon his great green eyes, and distinctly revealing his white fangs, as he gave utterance to one of his strange cries.

In spite of the awe and dread with which this mysterious being inspired him, Ned would not budge.

"What hev you done with the gal?" he cried. "Whar is she?"

But he had scarcely put the question when the fiend hurried, clattering away, in the darkness.

The youth resolved to follow him unseen, for he doubted not he would thus find where Grace had been concealed, and effect her rescue.

The night was dark, the moon being obscured by clouds, but the hunter could distinguish the outlines of the uncouth form, as it moved on, ahead of him. A walk of about a mile brought him to the hill upon which he had first seen the singular apparition. The latter a few yards beyond him, slowly moving along.

Ned waited until he had passed over the ridge, fearing he might detect him, if he drew too near. Then he moved on, but when he gained the ridge, he could no longer see the fugitive.

There was a path leading into a valley, beneath him, full of shrubbery, and the youth now descended it.

He soon reached the valley, and commenced

to search through the thick shrubbery and masses of rocks there for the mysterious being.

All at once he was startled by a sound like the neighing of a horse, only a few paces off!

He pushed aside the bushes, and could make out a broad path, which he followed to soon reach a wide alcove, between two masses of rock, with a rugged roof above.

In this alcove he was astonished to see Tom Derrick's wagon, with the two horses near it, tied to a rugged projection.

"Halloa!" he ejaculated, "what's the meaning of this? Hyar are the horses and wagon, shore enough, but whar is Tom?"

He climbed into the vehicle.

"Tom, are you thar?" he inquired, peering through the gloom.

There was no response. The hunter crept along, and, feeling about him, his hand came in contact with an ax, which was one of the many articles, the toy-maker had brought with him.

"Now I've got a weapon of some kind," he muttered, "I should like to come across that demon again. Kin it be that he has killed the boy, and taken persession of his wagon and goods?"

As he spoke he saw a form emerge from under some canvas in the back part of the conveyance, where it had been hidden, and, in spite of the darkness, he could make out the dim figure of the creature he was looking for.

"Horrible varmint!" cried Ned. "I bev you now! We'll see ef you're proof ag'in the blows of an ax!"

But as the hunter spoke the fiend got out of the back of the vehicle.

The boy also sprung out the next moment, and saw the dim figure of the fugitive ascending from the valley toward the ridge on top of the hill.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ESCAPE.

As already stated, the Apaches, a short time before they were attacked by the Navajoes, on the night when their foes surprised them, missed their prisoner, Grace Derrick, and commenced to search for her.

This prevented their seeing some of the Navajoes steal up behind their guards, who were near Tom's hut, and kill and scalp them.

It was about this time that Tom, as described, had freed Yohon from the wooden image in which he had been concealed.

"Don't you dinks we might git off, now?" inquired Yohon. "We might hitchens dem horses to der wagon, and away we goes, so fast dat der guards could not shtopen us! Den we goes to dat silver place, mit der silver!"

"The guards would shoot our horses," said Tom, "unless they too have joined in the hunt for my sister. I will go and take a look."

"Meanwhiles I hitches dem horses to der wagon."

"Be careful you are not seen. You had better put the wooden image of the man in the wagon, too. I would like to take that with me."

"All right. I bets you we be off from dis place, already, before ba'f an hours."

Tom went out to reconnoiter. To his sur-

prise he saw no guard, and he soon came upon the body of one who had been killed and scalped. In the distance he beheld dim figures stealing around to the other side of the camp, and he at once comprehended that Indian foes had come to attack the place.

"A better time for our escape we could not have!" he thought, as he hurried back to the hut.

Yohon had, ere this, hitched the team and placed the wooden man in the vehicle.

"We have no time to lose," he said to the Dutch lad. "The camp is going to be attacked by other Indians."

The boys were soon in the wagon, and Tom drove rapidly off, the wheels making but little noise upon the soft ground.

The lad had taken good notice of the direction of the silver mine, and as he kept on he soon behold the hill, with the ridge extending along its summit, looming up dimly in the distance.

Finally, the vehicle was driven into the tall shrubbery on the right of the elevation.

"We will stay here until the morning light shows us how we are to keep on," said the youth. "Meanwhile, we must take turns at standing watch."

Tom, who had the first watch while his companion slept in the wagon, soon heard the galloping of horses, and in the dim light saw mounted savages passing and repassing, not three hundred feet from his position.

At last all these shadowy figures disappeared, and the youth hoped they would not return.

He was glad enough when, some hours after Yohon had relieved him, he was awakened from a sound slumber by the Dutch youth, to be informed that it was now morning and that there was no sign of savages.

"Good!" he cried. "Now we will look about us a little."

An examination of the shrubbery soon showed the boys that they could get the wagon through into the valley behind the ridged hill. It was hard work to do this; but the task was accomplished at last, after which the two proceeded to straighten and readjust the displaced twigs and branches through which they had passed.

Looking about them in the valley, they finally discovered a good place of shelter in a sort of alcove among the rocks, for the wagon and the horses.

"Now, den, where's der silver?" said Yohon with greedy eyes.

Tom led the way to the lofty wall of rock, displaced the slab that concealed the opening at the base, and crawling through with his companion, showed him the precious metal on the inner side of the bight.

"Ach! ach! Glory to the Lord! We hafs him all! We hafs all der silver, which is t'ousand times better as makin' der livin's mit der toys. Ach!—"

"Yohon," interrupted Tom, "you must remember that we are in danger here. This mine is probably well known to the Indians, and we are likely to have a visit from them at any time. Some white hunter, too, might take a notion to come this way. We must think of some plan to keep people away from the place."

"Mein gollies, you's right! I would die mit der shame and der colic, if anybody gits dis silver from us. We must haf it all alone!"

"I wish Ned was here to share it with us."

"No, no!" said Yohon, scowling. "We not wants dat feller here. We must keeps him away, too. Den we hafs all de more ourselves."

"You are too greedy. If Ned should come here, I'd welcome him."

"No!"

"Yes; the mine belongs to me, as I discovered it through the Indians, and I have the right to say what shall be done."

"Dat's true; but I haf to say dat, if you haf dat Ned here, I hafs notting more to do mit der business. I not sthays here and helps you."

Tom knew that Yohon's desertion would be a great inconvenience.

"What have you against Ned?" he inquired.

"I hafs mooch. He is a prave fellers, and I likes him well enough for dat. But der fact is, dat fellers likes mein apple blossoms, mein Grace, a little too well; and I'm afraid she likes bin, too. I haf dat against him, and I don't wants to see him here, and haf him gits moneys so dat he can be as rich as me, and marries her."

"Pshaw, Yohon, I don't think Grace cares for him. "I wish she was here," added the boy, anxiously. "I hope Mona, who gave me her word, one day, that she would try to fix things so that she could escape from the camp, has succeeded."

"I hopes so, too, and I t'ink she have escap'."

"Well," said Tom, "now to business. We must try to think of some way to keep intruders from here."

For hours the boys talked the subject over, and at last they hit upon a plan which they hoped would succeed—for a time, at least.

For four days after that they were very busy with their tools, and with their machinery and materials in the wagon. On the afternoon of the fourth day, Yohon, who had mounted to the ridge on the hill, saw a party of savages approaching. He kept himself hidden, and watched them.

They proved to be a band of Navajoes, who, to his dismay, finally rode into the shrubbery on the right of the elevation, and, halting and picking their horses, seemed disposed to remain there for hours, if not longer.

A few minutes later, Yohon noticed, in the distance, a singular object approaching. True, there was a mist in that direction, which magnified everything to more than twice its natural size, but the Dutch boy felt sure he had never seen anything before like the distant vision which now met his gaze.

It had the appearance of a being with dark-colored legs, a square head and a wide mouth, but the mist soon thickened, so that the spectator could no longer see it.

He now cautiously descended the steep hill into the valley, and told Tom that Indians were in the shrubbery.

"We must get rid of them as soon as we can, if they attempt to come this way," said Tom.

"Oh, yes," said Yohon, confidently. "I dinks we can git riddens of dem, but I don't know what else we may hafens to try to riddens of!"

"What do you mean?"

Yohon exolained about the strange vision with the square head, which he had seen in the distance.

"Nonsense!" answered Tom. "It was probably some animal which the mist caused to look different from what it did."

"We sees pefre long," said Yohon. "It wass comin' dis way, and we soon gits a good look at him! If it wass not old Nicks, it wass mooch like dat fellers, mit der square head and der clover hoof!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE moment Ned Transom saw the figure of the fiend, Big Eye, ascending the hill, he darted in pursuit of him.

The hunter, gaining upon him, was within a few paces of him, when, all at once, the vision disappeared. Ned, searching carefully, looked behind some rocks, and there, in a hollow, he beheld the strange being. The moon, at the same moment, emerging from behind a cloud, lighted up the hideous form, and showed the great eyes, glittering with dazzling luster, in the square head.

"Hah! you varmint! I hev you now!" cried the hunter, as he raised his ax. "Tell me what you've done with the gal, 'fore I cut you in two!"

The mysterious creature made no reply, but suddenly, thrusting out his iron bound hand, he pushed the boy down; then he endeavored to rush past him, to descend the hill.

But Ned was too quick for him. He stretched out his hand, and, seizing him by the leg, caused him to fall flat. As he thus went down, he made a strange, clattering noise, while the hunter, startled by the hardness of the leg he had grasped, let go his hold.

Taking advantage of this, the demon commenced to partly scramble and partly slide down the hard, rocky surface of the descent.

The hunter overtook him, just as he reached the base of it, and threw himself boldly upon him. The iron hand of the singular being clutched him by the collar, but, at the same moment, raising his ax, Ned struck him a violent blow on the head.

To his astonishment, the head, with a loud, crackling noise burst open, and a well-known voice saluted his ears:

"Holts up, Ned! Der cat's out of der bags, now, and ifs you shrikes again, you shplits mein sinkull!"

"Halooa!" cried Ned, dropping his ax. "ef this ain't wonderfu! So you're Yohon, all the tim'!"

"Dat's it—I est dat fellers! Now I plows on der trumpet, and Tom will coom!"

A bent, curious-looking trumpet, which had evidently been selected from the toys in the wagon, and which had dropped from the lad's mouth, when his false head was split open, lay near him on the ground. He picked it up, and,

blowing upon it, made the same horrible noise, which previously so alarmed Ned and the Indians.

A lantern flashed at one end of the valley, and, a few minutes later, Tom Derrick made his appearance, accompanied by his sister.

"Safe and well!" cried Ned, joyfully, beholding the girl. "It sart'ainly is a treat to see you!"

"Oh, Ned, I am so glad you are here!" said Grace, blushing.

Meanwhile Tom proceeded to take off those sections of that part of the wooden image, in which Yohon was inclosed.

"So it's all of wood?" cried the hunter.

"Wood, cloth, steel and iron," replied Tom. "Yohon and I made this image after we came here."

He then went on to explain his escape from the Apache camp.

"After we got here, where, you must understand, there is a valuable silver mine, we thought of a plan for keeping the Indians away from the place. This plan was the making of an image, which would work upon their superstitious fears, and so frighten them off. It took us only four days to finish our horrible wooden fiend, as I had already partly made the figure, while in the camp, and we had brought it here with us. I had to make some alterations, so as to give it a more terrific appearance than I had at first intended. It was hollow so that Yohon could get into it, and the knees and hip pieces were joined and arranged so that he could make it walk. The green eyes were of glass, taken from our materials in the wagon, and the terrible voice was produced by a brazen trumpet we had among the toys, and which we fixed so that it would make a loud discordant unearthly noise. This trumpet had to be fastened to Yohon's mouth, when he was inside of the image, and, by this arrangement, he was unable to speak, for I was afraid he would forget himself, and utter words, in which case his Dutch accent would at once have betrayed him.

"On the fourth day after our coming here, Yohon saw some Navajoes halt in the shrubbery on our right. He also saw, in the distance, what he supposed was some strange object approaching, but which, when it came nearer, he perceived was a horse, with a piece of square cloth over its face, having slits in it for the eyes. You were leading this horse, and my sister, Grace, was upon it.

"What happened you know. Yohon appearing in the horrible-looking image in which I had incased him, ere I sent him up to the ridge a second time to take a lookout, frightened the savages so that they did not kill you.

"When Yohon told me that your horse had run away with you and Grace, I was much concerned about you and my sister, knowing that you must have been recaptured by the Indians.

"Next morning Yohon, incased in his wooden flend, was again behind the ridge, keeping watch, when he saw some of the Navajoes coming, having you and Grace with them as prisoners. He made his appearance, as you saw, and, a second time frightened them away, after

they had fired at him two bullets, which could not penetrate the pieces of steel, with which the inside of the image was lined.

"Yohon saw them drop Grace, as they passed through the shrubbery, and he afterward found her in a cave, where she swooned at sight of him.

"He picked her up and made off with her. Then—but he did not tell me *this* until hours after—you pursued, and he finally struck your rifle, causing it to hit you and knock you senseless.

"Then he carried Grace to our retreat in the valley, where, at that time, I was fast asleep, having been up all night. He awoke me, and we soon restored my sister to her senses. She asked for you the first thing, but Yohon, the little rascal, said not a word about you until hours after, when he told us how he had left you senseless on the hill.

"We went there at once, only to see a party of Apaches in the distance, making off with you on one of their horses.

"Yohon, who now felt sorry for the way he had acted toward you, said he would go and try to save you."

"And so he did," said Ned. "He frightened the savages away, just as they war goin' to burn me. Then he ran off, I pursued him, and at last overtook him, and broke his 'head,' as you see."

"I told you if you saw Ned to make yourself known to him," said Tom to the Dutch lad.

"Well, der fact is," answered Yohon, "I did not wants him and Grace to coom togeader; but I don't care now, for I believes she loves him, and dat I haft no charge."

There is little to add. The broken image was repaired, and was used several times afterward to frighten Indians away from the vicinity of the silver mine. The boys having finally procured all the silver they could carry in their wagon, repaired to a town, where Tom sold out at a good figure, his right to the mine to a party of prospectors.

Grace Derrick and Ned Transom are still warm friends, and the girl has promised to marry him, a year from the present time.

Yohon has transferred his affections to a blooming dams^el, lately from Holland, and there is no doubt that she will eventually become his wife.

THE END.

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